

# Chess Room Newsletter



A knight that has seen better days!

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## Recent Tournaments at the Mechanics' Institute

By Alex Robins

Our **53rd Capps Memorial** started off the month of November - and at the end of the tournament a few lucky players even got to meet **GM Judit Polgar** before her talk in the evening. The top section had a 5 way(!) tie for first place with **Theodore Biyiasas** (2189), **Beckett Spence** (1813), **Reyansh Paragiri** (2132), **Zlata Mokeeva** (1999), and **Vivaan Pavuluri** (1990) each scoring three points. I want to give a special shoutout to **Theodore Biyiasas** who crossed the 2200 line and is now a master - congratulations!

Theodore's father also won this tournament - and quite a few others at Mechanics' in years past which makes it even more fitting that Theo passed the threshold here!

The middle section also had a tie with **Hovik Manvelyan** (1823), **Michael Liu** (1667), and **Darsh Goel** (1562) all going undefeated with 3.5 points each. In the bottom section we had a clear winner with **Jack March Soloway** (1427) going 4 for 4 - congratulations! Behind him was **Vasisht Macharla** (1331), **Vikram Scherfke** (1423), and Mechanics' stalwart **Albert Starr** (1500) with three points each.

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Sztaray, IA Abel Talamantez, and ANTD Scott Mason.

Our **November Monthly Scholastic Swiss** was a fun tournament that was big enough for us to split into three sections! In the over 800 section, first place went to **Thomas Moore** (923) with a perfect score! Thomas was followed in order by: **Ethan Lueng** (1124), **Rishaan Nair** (1070), **Bradley Harger III** (1259), and **Wesley Wongchenko** (1093). Great job to all the players in what was a tough section!

In the 400-799 section, **Keshav Mehta** (415) also took home first with a perfect score - great job Keshav. **Shane Davis** (761), **Blake Ding** (691), and **Sergei Pimenov** (711), took home 2nd through 4th respectively with three points each and **Andre Wang** (770) took home 5th on tiebreaks.

In the under400 section, **Greyson Chai** (312) continued the trend of taking home first with a perfect score - nicely done Greyson! 2nd through 5th place



went respectively to: **Riyansh Koilada** (112), **Malcolm David** (unr.), **Kanstanstin Halasiuk** (unr.), and **Iksha Nair** (unr.).

A big thank you to all of our scholastic players and their families and tune in next month for an update on the school standings!

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by Senior TD Arthur Liou.

Our next tournament in November was our **Spy's Mate Rapid** to promote the new book [Spy's Mate](#) from Thinkers Publishing. The author Brad Buchanan read some passages and discussed his love for the history and lore of chess - particularly in the Soviet Union. If you're interested in the book, consider buying a copy at the chess club office!

In the 1600+ section of the rapid tournament our very own **NM Daniel Cremisi** (2350) took home first with 4.5 points and his only draw coming from second place **NM Aryan Balyan** (2235). Aryan was also tied for second with Mechanics' regular **Daniel Sevall** (1930) and **Evan Baldonado** (1631) who all scored three points each.

In the under 1600 section of the rapid tournament - first was tied four ways between **Calvin Dees** (1518), **Jimmy Sanchez** (1475), **Christopher J Conrad** (1437) and **Walid Ali** (unr.).

We also forgot to give out the planned book prizes from Thinkers Press so if you played and didn't get one - come knock on the office for a prize!

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by ANTD Scott Mason.

On the 15th we had our **3rd Vladimir Naroditsky Memorial Tournament** in honor of Daniel's father, who was a trustee and big supporter of the Mechanics' Institute. It pains us that now we have to specify which Naroditsky this tournament is honoring. In the 2000+ section we had a clear winner with **NM Sebastian Suarez** (2291) taking the section by storm with a perfect score. Sebbi was followed by **Kanwar Sethi** (2148), **Reyansh Paragiri** (2132), and **Evan Shi** (1838) who split second and third with three points each among them.

In the middle section, **Preron Chakrabarty** (1683) took home first place with 3.5 points just like in the tournament last month but this time with a higher rating! Second and third place were split four ways with **Violetta**

**Podieiapolskaia** (1661), **Theodore Miller** (1658), **Austin Bo Chen** (1649) with 3 points each.

In the under section, we had another clear first place winner with **Jonathan Dai** (1373) scoring 3.5 points. Right behind Johnathan we had a four way tie for second with **Anushka Patil** (1249), **Raymond Liu** (1111), and **Neev Srinivasan** (1091) and **Juliette Jones** (1047) - congrats to all of our players who placed and a big thank you to everyone who played!

Full results for the tournament can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by Senior TD Arthur Liou.

Our last tournament of the month was another one of our weekend fast chess tournaments - with rapid in the morning and blitz in the afternoon. These have become a lot of fun and we hope you will join us and that these tournaments continue to grow! In the top section of our **November Mechanics' Weekend Rapid**, **NM Aryan Balyan** (2232) took first place batting 5 for 5. **Abishek Mallela** took second place with 3.5 points and behind there was a six way tie between the following **NM Sebastian Suarez** (2291), **NM Vladyslav Shevkunov** (2214), **Eli Seidel** (1843), **Mikhail Grigorev** (1829), **Aavi Bharucha** (1722), and **Michael Liu** (1667).

The under section had **Fadi Arodaki** (1255) take home first place with 4.5 points. **Vik Markova-Raina** (1424) was right behind him with 4 points and **Phil Ploquin** (1709) took third place with 3.5.

Just a few hours later, in the **November Weekend Blitz** **CM Jamison Edrich Kao** (2240) took a clear first place with an impressive 6.5 points. Behind him was a tie for second between **NM Sebastian Suarez** (2291) and **NM Vladyslav Shevkunov** (2214). Shoutout to **Fritz Dutter** (1900) who has been playing and competing with only one eye!

In the under section, **Satyakam Dash** (1505) won first place with 6 points followed by Mechanics' regular **Samuel Agdamag** (1514) with 5 points. **Phil Ploquin** (1709), **Romeo Nehme** (1598), and **Fadi Arodaki** (1255) rounded things out with a tie for third place.

Thanks to all of our players who participated and I hope more will continue to join these fun weekend events!

Full results for the rapid can be found [here](#) and for the blitz [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Abel Talamantez.

## San Quentin Skunkworks: A Call for Players

By Abel Talamantez, IA, LSI, FIDE 100 Best Educator

Editor's Note: This was published last month but I'm publishing it again in the hopes of getting more players who would like to come play chess with us in San Quentin.

San Quentin Skunkworks Transformative Gaming initiative uses chess as an educational and rehabilitative tool to build 21st century skills, as well as promote social and emotional well being. The Pawns to Progress chess program has been preparing players for tournament play and we have already begun organizing USCF rated tournaments inside San Quentin.

Working in partnership with the Mechanics' Institute, we are looking for volunteers with a current USCF rating to be a part of our mission by coming into San Quentin to participate in USCF rated games. This will help players establish a more accurate standard rating, but more importantly, will help foster community and connection. Whether it be a 1-day tournament with several rounds or a once a week marathon type event, we are looking for people interested in helping us make a positive difference through chess. The Mechanics' Institute has previously partnered with San Quentin Skunkworks, click here to see an article on our past event: [San Quentin chess event unites prisoners, guards to transform lives | KTVU FOX 2](#)

Abel Talamantez is the Director of Chess and Community Impact for San Quentin Skunkworks, Lead Tournament Director at the Mechanics' Institute and Chess Program Director at Hamilton K-8 School in Novato, CA. He will be the facilitator and your guide on the inside. If you are interested in being a part of this team or have any additional questions, please reach out to Abel [a.talamantez@sanquentinskunkworks.org](mailto:a.talamantez@sanquentinskunkworks.org) or Alex Robins, Chess Room Director at the Mechanics' Institute [chessroom@milibrary.org](mailto:chessroom@milibrary.org).



## George H. Mackenzie: A Chess Biography with 1,297 Games

Reviewed by IM John Donaldson

Even most knowledgeable American chess fans, for whom the early 1860s to early 1890s are often a tabula rasa, would be hard-pressed to name a dominant American chess player between Paul Morphy and Harry Nelson Pillsbury. Yet one player held the title of US Champion from 1871 until his death in 1891. That individual was George Henry Mackenzie and during his career he was rated among the top ten players in the world and won the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th American Chess Congresses.

This forgotten American chess hero is the subject of a new book, *George H. Mackenzie: A Chess Biography with 1,297 Games*. Published by McFarland & Company ([mcfarlandbooks.com](http://mcfarlandbooks.com)) this massive book, close to 700 pages, is the magnum opus of John Hilbert, the preeminent American chess historian for the years 1845 to 1945.

This book, which Hilbert has been working on for over 25 years, is not only a definitive look at Mackenzie's life and games, it is also a critical examination of American chess in the decades after Morphy had stopped playing and before the rise of Pillsbury and Frank Marshall. Mackenzie, often referred to as Captain for his military service, was foreign born (Scotland) like his rival James Mason. Yet both players developed into world class players in the United States.

Besides his victories in three American Chess Congresses, Mackenzie had a number of international successes where he was a consistent performer who invariably finished near the top of the crosstable. These included:

4th Paris 1878, behind Johannes Zukertort, Syzmon Winawer, and Joseph Blackburne;

4th Vienna 1882, behind Wilhelm Steinitz, Winawer, and James Mason, but ahead of Blackburne;

5th London 1883, behind Zukertort, Steinitz, Blackburne, and Mikhail Chigorin;  
4th Hereford 1885, behind Blackburne, Henry Bird, and Ernst Schallopp, but ahead of future world title contender Isidor Gunsberg and Mason;  
7th Hamburg 1885, behind Gunsberg, Blackburne, Berthold Englisch, Mason, Siegbert Tarrasch, and Max Weiss;  
7th London 1886, behind Blackburne, Amos Burn, Gunsberg, Jean Taubenhaus, Mason, and Samuel Lipschutz;  
2nd in Bradford 1888, behind Gunsberg, but ahead of von Bardeleben, Mason, Burn, and Blackburne;  
3rd in Manchester 1890 behind Tarrasch and Blackburne, but ahead of Gunsberg and Mason.

In 1887, Mackenzie scored his greatest triumph when he won the German Championship in Frankfurt, ahead of Blackburne, Zukertort, Tarrasch and Louis Paulsen. Hilbert doesn't confine himself to just outlining Mackenzie's tournament but delves into all facets of his career debunking several myths, the foremost being his portrayal as a hero in the American Civil War. Mackenzie was a professional soldier, both for England and the Union in the Civil War, but there is no evidence he ever saw combat much less was a war hero. Hilbert has exhaustively researched Mackenzie's service in the United States which ended with him being charged with desertion. Whether this charge was fair or not is dealt with at length and ends with the Captain finding himself down and out in New York trying to find a place to sleep and looking for his next meal.

Thus begins a career as the first chess professional in the United States. During this time, which lasted almost three decades, Mackenzie would develop a model for fellow chess professionals to follow. Besides writing chess columns in newspapers and playing in tournaments, he was the first American to tour extensively throughout the United States giving hundreds of simulms and lectures.

Hilbert gives numerous examples that portray what a hard worker Mackenzie was. The following schedule comes from one of Mackenzie's many visits to Cuba:

*Following a break on Sunday, Mackenzie began his match play, which took place in a rather unusual fashion. On Mondays and Wednesdays, he played match games with Golmayo, while on Tuesdays and Thursdays, he did the same with Vázquez. Fridays were devoted to games at odds, and Saturdays to simultaneous play.*

Hilbert explains Mackenzie's long run as successful exhibitor as attributable to not only his playing strength but also his congenial personality which won him many fans. Self-effacing, he referred to himself as a small Morphy, partly a play on the fact that he was six feet tall when the height of the average American male was six inches shorter. Well-educated and speaking multiple languages he mixed in well with any crowd. Mackenzie is not the only story in this book. Hilbert examines several scandals including one that occurred between James Grundy and Preston Ware in the 5th American Chess Congress, one of the first examples of cheating in chess.

Elsewhere he shares the following spicy exchange between Max Judd and Wilhelm Steinitz not long after the latter settled in the United States.

Judd. "How do you do, Mr. Steinitz."

Steinitz. "Who are you?"

J. "You know very well who I am."

S. "You are no gentleman to have allowed that confab between us to appear in print."

J. "I had nothing whatever to do with its publication, and was surprised to see it myself when it appeared. I can't prevent the papers from publishing the news."

S. "I'll have nothing more to do with you. I prefer to speak to gentlemen."

J. "If you were my equal in age, Mr. Steinitz, I would make you apologize for your insulting language. It is only your seniority and this place that keeps me from attempting violence upon your person."

Clearly the chess world in the second half of the 19th century was not short of interesting characters and interactions!



Steinitz, the one American player who was clearly superior to Mackenzie, is front and center much of the last decade of the Captain's life. Witness the following description of the first World Champion who moved to the US in the mid-1880s and became a U.S. citizen at the end of the decade.

*A little man, with a full red beard, mustache and whiskers, a plentiful crop of light brown hair, and a twinkling blue eye, sat last night in the room of the Philadelphia Chess Club, at the Irving House, on Walnut above Ninth Street. Half a score of members sat around the jolly little man, who, from wearing a constant smile, gives out the idea that he couldn't look angry if he tried, not a little proud of their captain, for there in the flesh sat the greatest of living chess players, Wilhelm Steinitz. Steinitz is a small, stout, florid, sandy haired and bearded man of about 50, with broad features and a high domed head. His appearance is Teutonic. Martinez is a regular featured, dark eyed, dark-haired Cuban, of about 40, and betrayed more evidence of a nervous temperament than his competitor showed. Steinitz's favorite pose was with his arms folded, leaning on the table. Martinez leaned one elbow on the table, resting his forehead on his hand, which he occasionally ran through his hair. When things went well with Steinitz he took out a short, chubby pipe and, filling it with his left hand—being an ambidexter—began to smoke. When affairs grew precarious, he emptied the pipe mechanically with his left hand and slid it into his pocket. He has small, twinkling eyes and chubby hands, that, with his restless fingers and double handed movements, give him an odd appearance.*

Reading the first half of *George H. Mackenzie: A Chess Biography with 1,297 Games* one has the impression that the life of a chess professional was glamorous. Who wouldn't like playing lots of chess, meeting interesting people and enjoying plenty of domestic and international travel. Reading that the New Orleans Chess, Checkers and Whist Club had close to 1,000 members in 1890 suggests all was hunky-dory for chess pros in a golden age for the royal game. It's only near the end of the book that we learn that all is not peachy. Debt ridden, Mackenzie dies in his mid-50s of tuberculosis in a dodgy hotel room in New York City.

This might seem like bad luck but Hilbert, through some digging, has unearthed that when Mackenzie was not travelling that dodgy hotel in New York City was his home... for the last seventeen years of his life. Hilbert

emphasizes the precarious existence chess professionals enjoyed with the following description of the action at the 6th American Chess Congress of 1889, an event that Mackenzie was unable to play in because of increasing health issues.

*In the large room at No. 8 Union Square, where the chess congress is holding its tournament, twenty expert chess players spend from six to eight hours out of every twenty- four in earnest play. Hour after hour they sit looking steadily at the chess board, studying intently the position and concentrating all their intellectual powers in each move. This they have done almost daily for one month, and will continue to do so for another. When it is all over the winner of the greatest number of games will receive \$1,000, and the others proportionately less, until the five or six who rank lowest will get perhaps \$100 each. It is highly probable that the same amount of intellectual energy directed toward any other achievement would earn at least double these rewards. Nevertheless, every player in the tournament would rather earn \$10 in a game of chess than \$20 in any other manner. Many lovers of the game, especially in England, have bewailed the fact that chess is such a very poor profession. Of the men who have devoted their lives to chess but few have managed to make a comfortable living, and none has yet arrived at the degree of prosperity enjoyed by a professional baseball player of any reputation.*

*Nearly all the foreign players in the tournament receive small compensations from their local clubs to enable them to stay here for two months and perhaps longer. Otherwise most of them would be losers in the end. There is at present but one man who subsists entirely by chess playing, and that is Mr. Blackburne, of London.*

*But the other professional chess players all must fall back upon something else. Messrs. Steinitz, Mackenzie, Bird, Chigorin and Weiss, all brilliant chess players, devote most of their time to writing about chess, and even that but poor return—Mr. Mason said to the writer: “A man may devote his life to chess, and if he has a love for the game it is an easy step to take, but at the end of his life he will be no better off than when he began.”*

*George H. Mackenzie: A Chess Biography with 1,297 Games* is a fitting tribute to a forgotten hero of American chess who deserved better. Those with an interest in chess history, particularly the second half of the 19th

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century, will find this book a treasure trove with its stories, games, photos and crosstables that bring the early days of modern chess to life.

**Highly Recommended**

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## **Documents of San Francisco Chess History**

By IM John Donaldson and Alex Robins

A few months ago, John brought some documents from the history of our chess club and of San Francisco in general. I also believe that the Sleepy Hollow Chess Parlor shared some members and staff with our club. I wanted to share these artifacts of Mechanics' history and San Francisco chess history more generally with our audience! I'll also periodically share more things like this and artifacts from our archive.



# The Sleepy Hollow Chess Parlor opens its doors

CLAY GEERDES

"Facts don't matter in this game, only psychology."

"You want to form an alliance?"

"He's the stronger player. Let's gang up on him."

"Go eat a bagel."

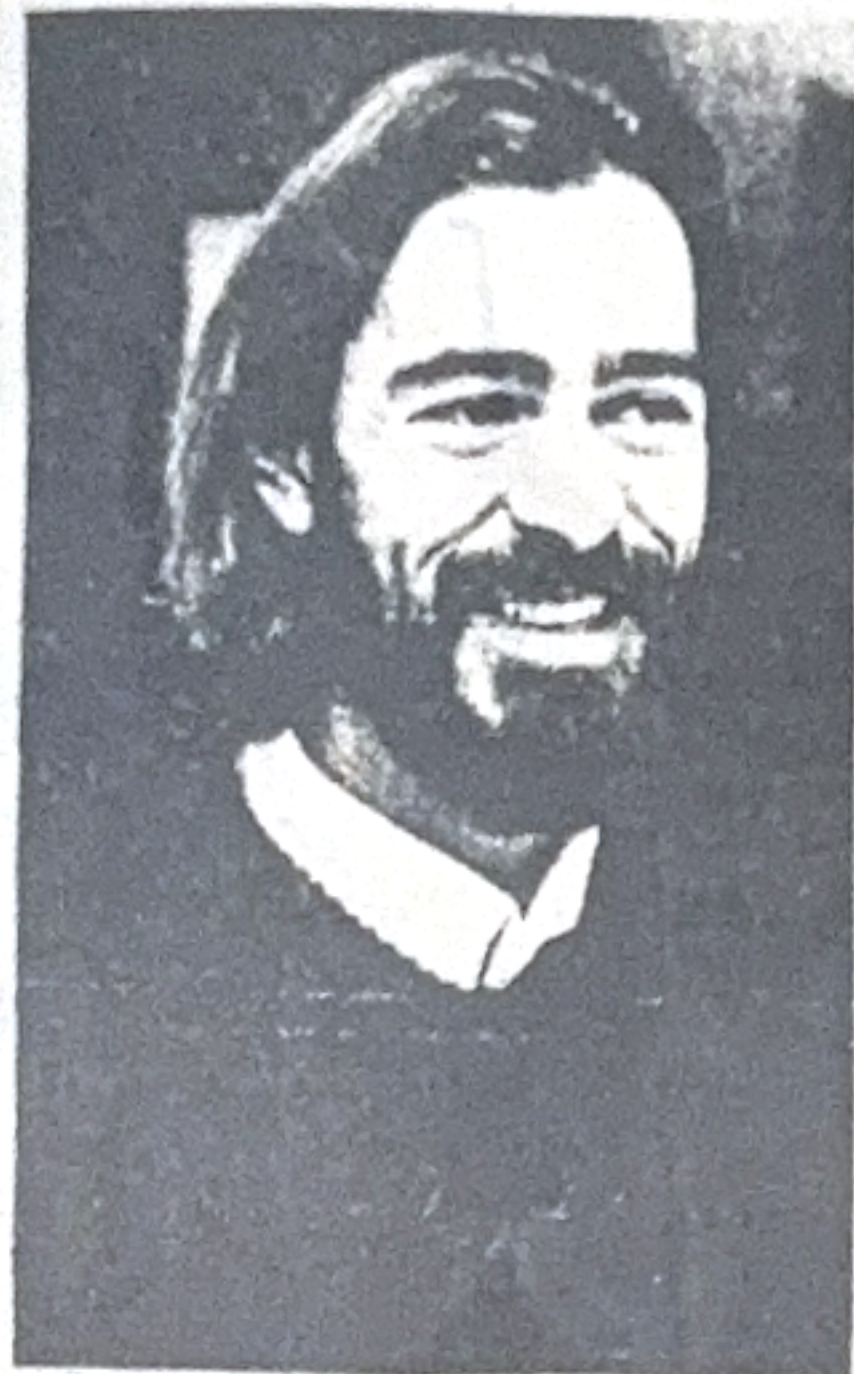
"I also know Latin and French."

"You knock off the strongest."

"—not a potential threat yet except for the loss of this pawn."

"I'm going to put you in double check."

"I was in check. You have to get out of check first."



ANDREW CHRISTIE

"Now we still have to ally against him."

"We're supposed to be partners. Don't work against me."

"You broadcast your intentions, then your intentions are worthless."

"Gimme a break."

"I'll break your arm."

I'm in the ante-room of the Sleepy Hollow Chess Parlor at 1825 Union Street in San Francisco, one of the more interesting reactions to the Fischer-Spassky Match. This up-

Union Street, the latest notch on the

Gray Line Tour. It was logical that the Petersons would be hustled by the numerous freelance designers, seamstresses, artists, and artisans who live in the Bay Area. Some of these people sell their wares themselves, setting up on a street corner like Haste and Telegraph in Berkeley or Beach and Hyde in San Francisco, but many prefer to consign their clothing and leathercraft to small boutiques like Things on Clement or Thousand Fingers on Fillmore. This frees them to work and leaves the selling process to others.

Those artisans in the Street Artists' Guild are generally opposed to consignment, because they feel craftsmen should deal directly with those people who are going to use their handiwork. It's a matter of personal contact vs. middlemen. At the present writing, the Bay Area has an enormous surplus of people in the arts and crafts and more are arriving daily to prepare their displays for the Christmas shopping orgy coming up.

Sleepy Hollow didn't make it as a boutique. The Petersons had a conference with Andrew Christie, a young man they met at the Alameda Penny Market (a reconverted drive-in cum flea market which is mobbed every weekend by itinerant salesmen), and the trio discussed opening a Chess Parlor. Alan and C. B. were longtime chess players and the idea was not new. As Alan said, "We had to wait until the general public was receptive." Public reaction to the Fischer-Spassky Match convinced them that the time was ripe. Not only were people playing chess and mobbing the free sessions offered by Macy's, but every bookstore in the Bay Area was sold out of paperbacks related to chess. By mid-August of 1972, all of the unsold consignment items had been removed from Sleepy Hollow

example, produces Collectors' Series sets. The First Edition is based upon Ancient Rome. All of the pieces have historical backgrounds. The King is Emperor Augustus Caesar, the Queen Livia Dursilla; the Bishop Cicero; and the Knight is a Roman cavalryman. The Rook is a column erected on the Forum in honor of Admiral Duilius, and the Pawns are Roman foot soldiers. In Edition II, the King and Queen are Napoleon and Josephine and the Bishop is Tallyrand. Edition V is called The Educator, because it enables the novice to minor his moves and plan. This set has the Movement Pattern of a piece imprinted on the base of that piece. The Classic sets run from eight to a hundred dollars depending upon the materials used. The hundred dollar set is hand-painted and the pieces are distinguished by intricate detail.

Staunton makes sets in styles from Florentine to Gothic and Kontrell Industries has a Peter Max set which sells for \$10. Many craftsmen prefer to do their own unique games and there are usually a number of these on display at the Renaissance Faires held in California each Fall. Donna Sloan, who authored *The Fat Cat Coloring Book*, researched and carved a Saracens and Christians set. Kathy, a member of the Thousand Fingers co-operative on upper Fillmore, cast a set of wheelthrown stoneware pieces. Her board is of inlaid ceramic tile and the set is going for a hundred dollars. Fraser's in Berkeley handles marble sets which sell at more than a hundred, but the bulk of the chess business in that area is done by the East Asia Bookstore with most of the players hanging around Hardcastles on Telegraph Avenue or The Loft on College.

I never knew there were a lot of chess spies around until one afternoon when I stopped into a shop on Sutter Street and asked the manager to let me photograph his display. He had a lot of Chinese and Jade sets in a nicely lighted area near the door. No. No photographs. He was paranoid about having his display technique copied. It couldn't have been the sets, because they would have been copyrighted by the firms that produced them.

Sleepy Hollow Chess Parlor opened in August and from the beginning it attracted a wide range of people, not so much the pros (experts and Masters) who play in the Chess Room at the Mechanics Library on Post Street or at the Berkeley Chess Club, but ordinary people who had had their initial interest in chess revived by the excitement of the recent match. Sleepy Hollow offered lessons to those who wanted to learn or improve their game and a playing room for those who loved the game and had trouble finding other players.

One of those who came to teach at the Parlor was an ex-post office worker and Top Dog fry cook named Don Dean, a "chess bum" as he referred to himself when I interviewed him in mid-September. He was born in Portland and grew up along the California Coast. He got into chess in junior high school in the Fifties, did some time in the Math Department at UC Berkeley in 1962,

and was getting his first tournament experience in Germany by 1965. While he was in Europe, the movie *Exodus* turned him on and he hitchhiked around Israel, stopping in Monaco to see Bobby Fischer finish one-half point ahead of Smyslov in the 1967 tournament. Since 1967, Dean has been dropping in and out of school. He joined the U.S. Chess Federation in 1961 and is now a life member. I asked him the advantage of belonging to U.S.C.F. and he said one received a rating, magazine, and access to official tournaments.

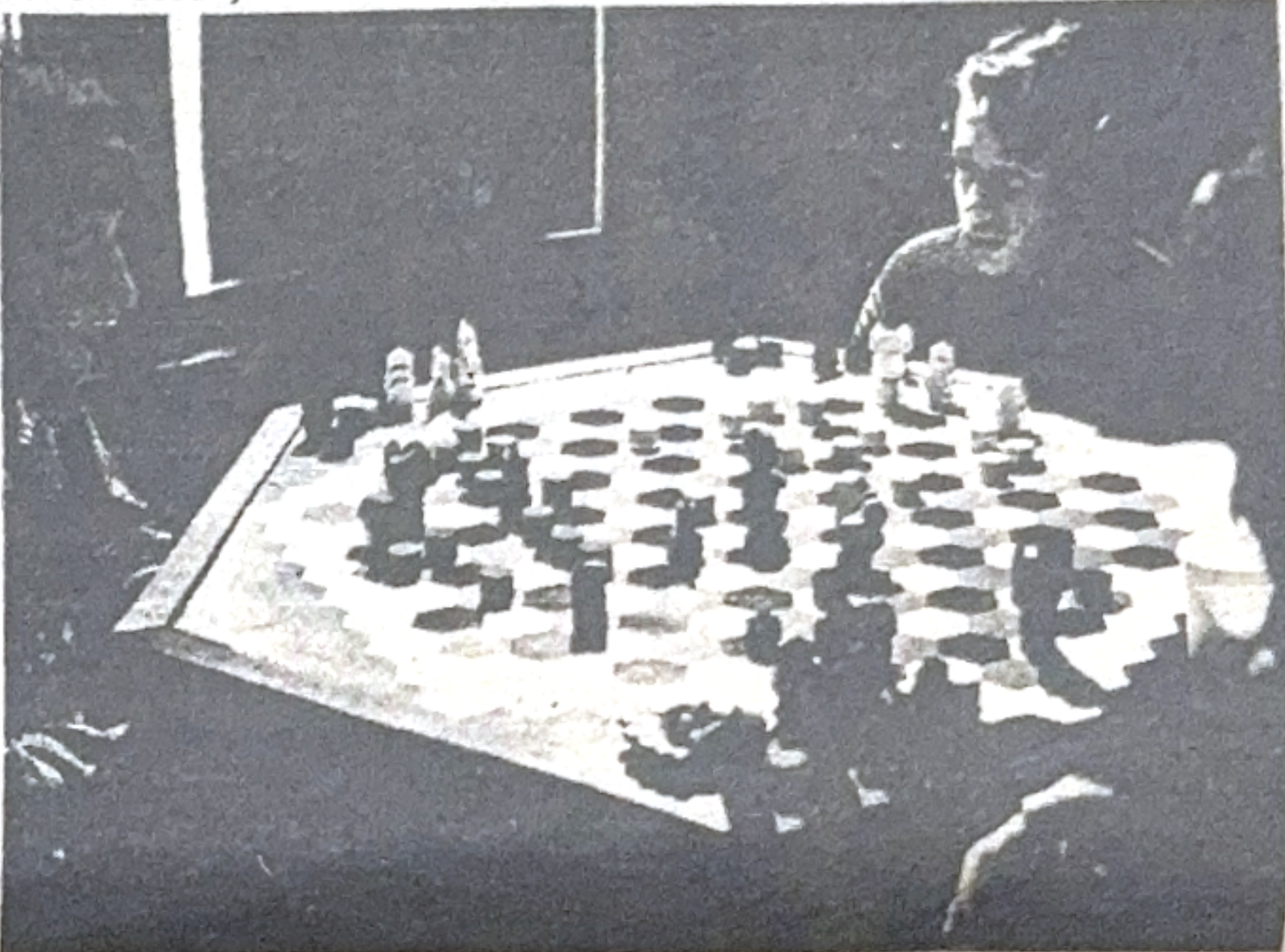
When Dean meets a student for the first time, he plays him/her a few games, noting the moves down on a white note pad. He evaluates the strength of the student on the basis of his organization, how he develops his game and gets his pieces into play. Terminology is discussed as it comes up.

For the novice, Dean recommends the books of Reuben Fine: *Chess the Easy Way* (Cronerstone, \$1.25 in paperback), *Ideas Behind the Chess Openings*, *The Middle-Game in Chess*, and *Basic Chess Endings*. Finished with a preliminary session which usually runs about an hour

seems true of Sleepy Hollow where many of the players are young women in their mid-twenties. I asked Dean why fewer women than men played the game and he suggested it had to do with the "image of the sport as a man's game."

One young man, an enthusiast of "speed chess," argued that chess was an aggressive game. Into the psychology of his opponents, he said, "the object of the game is to demoralize your opponent and beat him. That's what Fischer did to Spassky." A French woman disagreed with him when he proposed a sexual basis for the game. For her it was an exercise of the intellect.

The Berkeley student came to Sleepy Hollow often in the days before classes began and he always challenged everyone to play him a fast game. "Speed Chess" or Rapid Transit Chess is played by the clock. A chess clock has two faces or is two clocks in one. Both are set for five minutes and the play begins. As each player moves he strikes the plunger on top of his clock. This stops his side of the clock and starts that of his opponent. While slow



HEX: THREE-WAY CHESS GAME

and a half, Don explains chess notation and urges his student to record all games played between lessons.

At this writing, Sleepy Hollow has three teachers: Don Dean, Joe Lynch, and Phil Topping. All three are kept busy handling the beginning and intermediate students whose occupations range from computer analyst to elementary teacher. The routine at the Parlor is simple and relaxed. People drop in to find someone who wants a game. Players are charged a board fee of fifty cents an hour or a dollar for as long as they wish to stay. So far week nights seem most popular.

Shortly after the Parlor opened, Andrew S. Braden and a couple of his friends arrived with a large demonstration model of an hexagonal chess game, HEX. Braden invented the game which is essentially chess designed for three instead of two players. demonstration games are now being played each Thursday night at seven o'clock.

While women are rare visitors to most chess clubs, the opposite

chess is not much of a spectator sport. "Speed chess" is exactly the opposite, a fascinating game to watch. The student would give his opponents a time advantage. He was further advanced than most of them so he beat them easily whether he gave them extra time or not. He gave one woman 20 minutes to his one and still took the game, and what he was doing was giving her the thinking time. He didn't need it. He would move and hit his clock so fast that no time at all passed on his side. Having the extra time proved to be psychological disadvantage to her. He knew this and it was one of the reasons why he liked to give his opponents that apparent advantage. Winning such a game made him look superior by contrast, and he was a man who had to win.

Chess is a game which knows few barriers. Old and young people come to the Parlor. Blacks, Asians, Chicanos, of both sexes drop in for an afternoon or evening game. It's a relaxed coffeehouse atmosphere.

If you recognized the opening dialogue, you're already a HEX player.

Check. Mate. —L.A. Freep/ups



SLEEPY HOLLOW CHESS PARLOR

stairs Victorian Parlor was opened by Alan and Charles B. Peterson as a gift shop and boutique in September of 1970. Alan, a Merchant Seaman at the time, was travelling in South America, and C. B. was working in sales at IBM. The brothers planned to go into the import-export business and Sleepy Hollow was to be their showroom.

Located on newly redeveloped

and the upstairs rooms were filled with chess sets and games-in-progress. Alan and C. B. managed the Parlor, while Andrew arranged for chess boards, games and other sale items.

The range of chess materials is extensive and one may expect it to expand now that an American holds the top spot. Classic Games Company of Deer Park, New York, for

Photos by Clay Geerdes

## Chess Barbs

by Jude Acers (US senior master)

'DRAWN OUT DRAW: FISCHER KEEPS 3 POINT LEAD, 9½-6½

White: Robert Fischer. Black: Boris Spassky. Reykjavik, Iceland, Aug. 20, 1972. World Championship, Match Game No. 16. Ruy Lopez.

1 e4(A) e5(B) 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Bc6(C) dc 5 0-0(D) f6(E) 6 d4(F) Bg4(G) 7 de(H) Qd1(I) 8 Rdl fe(J) 9 Rd3(K) Bd6(L) 10 Nbd2 Nf6 11 Nc4 Ne4 12 Nce5 (M) Bf3(N) 13 Nf3 0-0(O) 14 Be3 b5(P) 15 c4(Q) Rab8(R) 16 Rcl bc(S) 17 Rd4(T) Rfe8(U) 18 Nd2 Nd2 19 Rd2(V) Re4(W) 20 g3(X) Be5(Y) 21 Rcc2(Z) Kf7(AA) 22 Kg2 Rb2(BB) 23 Kf3(CC) c3(DD) 24 Ke4 cd 25 Rd2(EE) Rb5(FF) 26 Rc2 Bd6 27 Rc6 Ra5(GG) 28 Bf4(HH) Ra4ch

29 Kf3 Ra3ch 30 Ke4 Ra2 31 Bd6 cd 32 Rd6 Rf2 33 Ra6 Rh2(II) 34 Kf3(JJ) Rd2 35 Ra7ch Kf6 41 Ra6ch Re6 42 Ra5 h6 43 Ra2 Kf5 44 Rf2ch Kg5 45 Rf7 Kh6 46 Rf4 h5 47 Rf3 Rf6 48 Ra3 Re6 49 Rf3 Re4 50 Ra3 Kh6 51 Ra6 Re5 52 Kh4 Re4ch 53 Kh3 Re7 54 Kh4 Re5 55 Rb6 Kg7 56 Rb4 Kh6 57 Rb6 Rel 58 Kh3 Rhlch 59 Kg2 Ral 60 Kh3 Ra4 61 Drawn.

(Notes by international grandmaster Svetozar Gligorich, adapted from "Skak", No. 16, 1972, pp. 260, 264-65 and 269).

(A) Since the 10th game Fischer has not played this, his favorite first move.

(V) A different opening, but the same cautious approach as in the 14th game.

(C) Deviating from the 10th game, Fischer surprised everyone with this exchange variation at the chess olympics in Havana, 1966, when he won three fine games with it.

(D) This improvement has been known for some time, and Fischer revived it. White plays for the fastest possible development.

(E) Interesting is 5...Qd6, played recently by Portisch at Las Palmas.

(F) White parted with the bishop pair hoping for an effective pawn majority on the king side in the ending.

(G) A powerful rejoinder. Another possibility is 6...ed 7 Nd4, and White has somewhat the better position: 7...c5? 8 Nb3 Qd1 9 Rdl Bd6 10 Na5! b5 11 c4 Ne7 12 Be3 f5 13 Nc3 f4 14 e5 Be5 15 Be5 (Fischer-Portisch, Havana, 1966).

(H) A move that can lead to a sharp endgame. Playable is 7 c3 ed! 8 cd, with better chances for White (Fischer-Gligorich and Fischer-Jamenez, Havana, 1966), but 7...Bd6 gives Black good counterplay and has been used successfully in recent tournaments (e.g., Hort-Gligorich, Sousse, 1967).

(I) Necessary to prevent loss of

a pawn.

(J) An interesting continuation is 8...Bf3 (breaking up White's king-side pawns) 9 gf fe 10 f4 Nf6! 11 fe Ne4, with a good game (Lee-Gligorich, Hastings, 1967). In his book Fischer recommends 10 Be3 and 11 Nd2 here.

(K) Avoiding the pawn weakness, as was played in the game Fischer-Smyslov, Monte Carlo, 1967.

(L) This is a well known improvement. The older line, 9...Bf3 10 Rf3 Nf6 11 Nc3 Bb4 12 Bg5 Bc3 13 bc (Fischer's idea), yields White an overwhelming endgame advantage.

(M) Or 13 Nfe5 Be6 with a satisfactory position (Hecht-Matano-ovic, Berlin, 1971).

(N) Black does not lose tempi on preserving the two bishops, while 12...Bf5 13 g4 is no good in view of the threat of Re3.

(O) Black has excellent development. White's sole advantage lies in the possibility of mobilizing his king-side pawn majority, but this is a far distant goal.

(P) Utilizing his queen-side pawn majority for the purpose of gaining more space, at least, and possibly to menace White's pawns

on the second rank.

(Q) Opposing Black's plans by trying to blockade the enemy pawns.

(R) Reinforcing the advanced "b" pawn.

(S) Black cannot rely on his doubled "c" pawns. Rather than wait for the complete blockade of the queen side, he prefers to open lines there himself.

(T) Forced. Not 17 Rc4? because of 17...Rb2 18 Re4? Rblch.

(U) Maintaining the knight on its good post, but White gets rid of it on his next move.

(V) White's rooks are the more active and at the same time



Position after 22 Kg2.



## WON HONORS IN CHESS.

Walter S. Franklin Carries Off  
the First Prize Gold  
Medal.

### CLOSE OF THE BIG TOURNEY.

G. Thompson Succeeds in Securing  
Second Place After an Ex-  
citing Contest.

The handicap tournament which has been in progress for some time at the Mechanics' Institute was concluded yesterday. There were thirty-two contestants divided into four classes as follows:

First class, scratch—H. O. Chase, Thomas D. Condon, F. H. Curtis, J. M. Durkin, S. Epstein, W. S. Franklin, J. Hirsch, Thomas Martin, E. L. McClure, E. Nevill, Richard Ott, Oscar Samuels, Rudolf Stein, G. R. Thompson.

Second class, at odds of pawn and move—Fred Burnett, J. R. Chilton, E. A. Cutting, H. Epstein, R. J. Harding, A. Schuman, C. W. Spalding, George Walker.

Third class, at odds of pawn and two moves—

I. Boxall, R. F. McLeod, John Newman, Charles Muller, C. Thomas, J. M. Torres.

Fourth class, at odds of knight—George Burnett, I. Denton, C. L. Miel, A. D. Reynolds.

Dr. Benjamin Marshall, the nestor and patron of chess on the Pacific Coast, and Messrs. H. Hyneman, D. L. Lyons, Joseph Sullivan and Joseph Waldstein acted as judges, and Richard Ott as secretary. The tournament has been conducted under the rules as given in Steinitz's Modern Chess Instructor. Time limit: Twenty moves per hour. Winners of first two games in each round to remain, losers to drop out entirely. Draws not to count. Following were the results:

Winners of first round—Messrs. Boxall, Chase, Chilton, Condon, Cutting, Denton, H. Epstein, Franklin, McClure, McLeod, Ott, Samuels, Stein and Thompson.

Winners of second round—Messrs. Boxall, Condon, Denton, Franklin, McClure, McLeod, Ott and Thompson.

Winners of third round—Messrs. Denton, Franklin and Thompson.

Winners of fourth round—Messrs. Franklin and Thompson.

Winner of fifth and final round—Walter S. Franklin, who consequently obtained first prize, a gold medal, and G. R. Thompson, second prize, a silver medal.

The contest has been an exciting one throughout, and when it finally settled down to between Franklin and Thompson the incidents occurring in the chessroom during the past week will long be remembered. C. R. Thompson has an international reputation, while Walter Franklin is not yet 18 years of age, and two years ago knew nothing about the game.

Walter Franklin is the son of Joseph Franklin, the well-known merchant on Battery street. He was born in this City, attended the public schools, and is now a student of Cooper's Medical College. The moves were taught him by his father and by Oscar Samuels, another of the youthful champions of the Mechanics' Institute.

(b) Loses valuable time by this sally of the queen and return.

(c) Again loss of time and weakening the K P ought to have developed his king's bishop.

(d) The proper place for this bishop is at queen's third, but owing to the forced advance of his king's knight pawn, is, perhaps, best at knight's second.

(e) Q R-Q B square is certainly stronger at this stage.

(f) This move loses the game. Queen bishop to queen second would still have given an even game.

(g) With this capture the last hope fades away. The pawn in the center must win, play black as he might.

Presentation of prizes will take place on Friday evening next at 8 o'clock at the chessroom of the Mechanics' Institute.

Following is the score of one of the final games between Franklin and Thompson:

White (Franklin).

Black (Thompson).

#### FRENCH DEFENSE.

1. P-K 4	P-K 3
2. P-Q 4	P-Q 4
3. Kt-Q B 3	Kt-K B 3 (a)
4. P-K 5	K Kt-Q 2
5. P-K B 4	P-Q B 4
6. P x P	Kt x P
7. P-Q Kt 4	Kt-Q 2
8. P-Q R 3	Q-R 5 check (b)
9. P-Kt 3	Q home
10. K B-Kt 2	P-K B 3 (c)
11. P x P	Kt x P
12. Kt-B 3	Q-Kt 3
13. Q-K 2	Kt-B 3
14. B-Kt 2 (d)	B-K 2
15. Kt-Q R 4	Q-B 2
16. P-Q B 4	Castles
17. Kt-H Kt 5 (e)	K-R
18. Castles-K R	H-K
19. B x Kt	B x B
20. R-Q B sq	H x Kt (f)
21. P x P	Kt-Q 5
22. Q-K 4	Q-Q 2
23. Kt-Q B 5	Q x P
24. Q-Q 3	Kt-K B G check
25. R x Kt	B-B 3
26. Q x Q	P x Q
27. R-Q 3	P-Q Kt 3
28. B x P	B-K B 4
29. B x R	B x R
30. Kt x B	R x B
31. Kt-K 5	K-Kt
32. K-B 2	H-K sq
33. R-K	R x Kt (g)
34. P x B	K-B 2
35. K-B 3	K-K 3
36. K-K 4	R-Q B
37. R-Q	R-Q B 4 check
38. R-Q 4	R-B 7
39. R-Q 6 check	K-K 2
40. K-Q 5	R x P
41. K-B 6	P-Kt 4
42. R-Q 6 check	K-K 3
43. R x Q R P	K x P
44. K x P	K-B 4
45. R-Q B 7	K-Kt 5
46. K-Q B 3	P-K R 4
47. P-Q R 4	R-K Kt 7
48. P-R 5	R x P
49. R x R	K x R
50. P-R 6	P-R 5
51. P-R 7	P-Kt 5
52. P queens	P-R 6
53. K-Q B 5	K-R 7
54. Q-R 2 check	K-R 8
55. Q-Kt check	K-Kt 7
56. Q-Q B 2 check	K-B 6
57. Q-Q sq check	K-Kt 6
58. Q-K sq check	K-B 6
59. Q-B check	K-Kt 6
60. Q-Kt check	K-B 6
61. P-Kt 5	P-Kt 6
62. P-Kt 6	P-R 7
63. Q-R check	K-Kt 6
64. Q-Kt 2	Resigns

#### NOTES BY RICHARD OTT.

(a) It is generally conceded that (3) Kt K B 3 subjects the defense to a difficult game. The best reply to (3) Kt Q B 3 is P x P.



# 25th ANNUAL CARROLL M. CAPPS MEMORIAL CHESS TOURNAMENT

AN AMERICAN HERITAGE EVENT

November 10-12, 1995

MECHANICS INSTITUTE  
57 POST STREET, FOURTH FLOOR CHESS ROOM  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
(NEAR MONTGOMERY STREET BART STATION)

- FIVE ROUND SWISS SYSTEM
- 15 GRAND PRIX POINTS

## GUARANTEED PRIZES

1ST - \$400; 2ND - \$225; 3RD - \$150  
Best Expert - \$200; Best "A" - \$175;  
Best "B" - \$150; Best "C" - \$125; Best Unrated - \$100.  
(Prizes will be mailed in 3 days)

**TIME CONTROL:** 50 moves in 2 hours; followed by 30 moves per hour.

**ROUNDS:** Friday 7 p.m.; Saturday 10:30a.m. & 5 p.m.; Sunday 9:30a.m. & 4p.m.

**ENTRY FEE:** \$37 if received by 11/4/95; \$45 thereafter (limited to first 80 players.)

**DISCOUNTS:** \$2 Discount to **CALCHESS** members.  
\$2 Discount to **MECHANICS INSTITUTE** members (only one discount per entrant.)

**SEND ENTRY TO:** Mechanics Institute Chess Club  
57 Post Street #407  
San Francisco, CA 94104

**LATE REGISTRATION:** 5 - 6 p.m., Friday 11/10/95 (Late registrants paired separately in Round 1.)

**BOOKSTORE:** Games of Berkeley

**INFORMATION:** Mike Goodall, T.D. (510) 548-6815. No phone entries.

NO SMOKING and NO COMPUTERS. BRING CHESS CLOCK. CCA MINIMUM RATINGS USED.  
NO 1/2 POINT BYES AVAILABLE. USCF MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED.

✂

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NAME: _____	ENTRY FEE: _____ \$37
ADDRESS: _____	USCF (\$40/yr.): _____
CITY: _____	CalChess (\$12/yr. Optional): _____
STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____	Crosstable (\$1 Optional): _____
USCF ID#: _____ EXP. DATE: _____	SUBTOTAL: _____
PHONE#: _____ RATING: _____	CalChess Discount or Mechanics Discount: _____
	TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

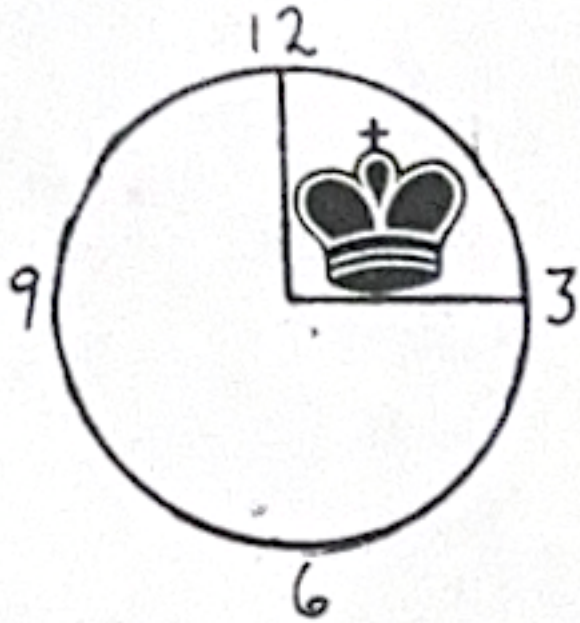


# A ONE DAY RATED CHESS TOURNAMENT

## The S. F. GAME 45 CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

September 21, 1996

Sponsored by: The Golden Gate Chess Association



MECHANICS INSTITUTE  
57 POST STREET, FOURTH FLOOR CHESS CLUB  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
(NEAR MONTGOMERY STREET BART STATION)

- FIVE ROUND SWISS SYSTEM, ONE SECTION
- 10 GRAND PRIX POINTS    ■ RATED AT 1/2 K

SPECIAL PACKAGE DEAL  
WITH ADVANCE ENTRY:  
1yrUSCF+1yrCALCHESS+EF=\$70

### GUARANTEED PRIZES

1ST - \$200; 2ND - \$125; 3RD - \$75  
Best Expert - \$150; Best "A" - \$125; Best "B" - \$100;  
Best "C" - \$75; Best "D" & Under - \$50; Best Unrated - \$50.  
(Prizes will be mailed in 3 days)

TIME CONTROL: Game in forty-five minutes (sudden death).

ROUNDS: Saturday 10:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 6 p.m., and 8:30 p.m.

ENTRY FEE: \$29 if received by 9/14/96; \$35 thereafter (limited to first 80 players.)

DISCOUNTS: \$2 Discount to CALCHESS members.  
\$2 Discount to MECHANICS INSTITUTE members (only one discount per entrant.)

SEND ENTRY TO: And Make Check Payable to: Mike Goodall  
2420 Atherton St. #6  
Berkeley, CA 94704-2132

LATE  
REGISTRATION: 9 - 10 a.m., Saturday, 9/21/96 (Late registrants paired separately in Round 1.)

INFORMATION: Mike Goodall, Tournament Director; (510) 548-6815. No phone entries.  
One dollar of every entry fee donated to Professional Chessplayers' Health and Benefit Fund.

NO SMOKING and NO COMPUTERS. BRING CHESS CLOCK. CCA MINIMUM RATINGS USED.  
✂ NO 1/2 POINT BYES AVAILABLE. USCF MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED. ✂

NAME: _____		ENTRY FEE:	\$29
ADDRESS: _____		USCF (\$40/yr.):	_____
CITY: _____		CalChess (\$12/yr. Optional):	_____
STATE: _____	ZIP CODE: _____	Crosstable (\$1 Optional):	_____
USCF ID#: _____	EXP. DATE: _____	SUBTOTAL:	_____
PHONE#: _____	RATING: _____	CalChess Discount or Mechanics Discount:	_____
		TOTAL ENCLOSED:	_____



# 26th ANNUAL CARROLL M. CAPPS MEMORIAL CHESS TOURNAMENT

## November 8-10, 1996

An American Heritage Event

MECHANICS INSTITUTE  
57 POST STREET, FOURTH FLOOR CHESS ROOM  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
(NEAR MONTGOMERY STREET BART STATION)

- FIVE ROUND SWISS SYSTEM
- 20 GRAND PRIX POINTS

### GUARANTEED PRIZES

1ST - \$400; 2ND - \$225; 3RD - \$150  
Best Expert - \$200; Best "A" - \$175; Best "B" - \$150;  
Best "C" & Under - \$125; Best Unrated - \$100.

(Prizes will be mailed in 3 days)

- TIME CONTROL: 50 moves in 2 hours; followed by game in one hour (sudden death).
- ROUNDS: Friday 7 p.m.; Saturday 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.; Sunday 9:30 a.m. & 4 p.m.
- ENTRY FEE: \$39 if received by 11/2/96; \$49 thereafter (limited to first 80 players.)
- DISCOUNTS: \$2 Discount to **CALCHESS** members.  
\$2 Discount to **MECHANICS INSTITUTE** members (only one discount per entrant.)
- SEND ENTRY TO: **Mechanics Institute Chess Club**  
**57 Post Street #407**  
**San Francisco, CA 94104**
- LATE  
REGISTRATION: 5 - 6 p.m., Friday 11/8/96 (Late registrants paired separately in Round 1.)
- INFORMATION: Mike Goodall, Tournament Director; (510) 548-6815. No phone entries.  
One dollar of every entry fee donated to Professional Chessplayers' Health and Benefit Fund.

NO SMOKING and NO COMPUTERS. BRING CHESS CLOCK. CCA MINIMUM RATINGS USED.

✂

NO 1/2 POINT BYES AVAILABLE. USCF MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED.

✂

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
USCF ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE#: \_\_\_\_\_ RATING: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY FEE: \$39  
USCF (\$40/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_  
CalChess (\$12/yr. Optional): \_\_\_\_\_  
Crosstable (\$1 Optional): \_\_\_\_\_  
SUBTOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
CalChess Discount or Mechanics Discount: \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_



## The Pawns' Secret Life

By Renate Otterbach

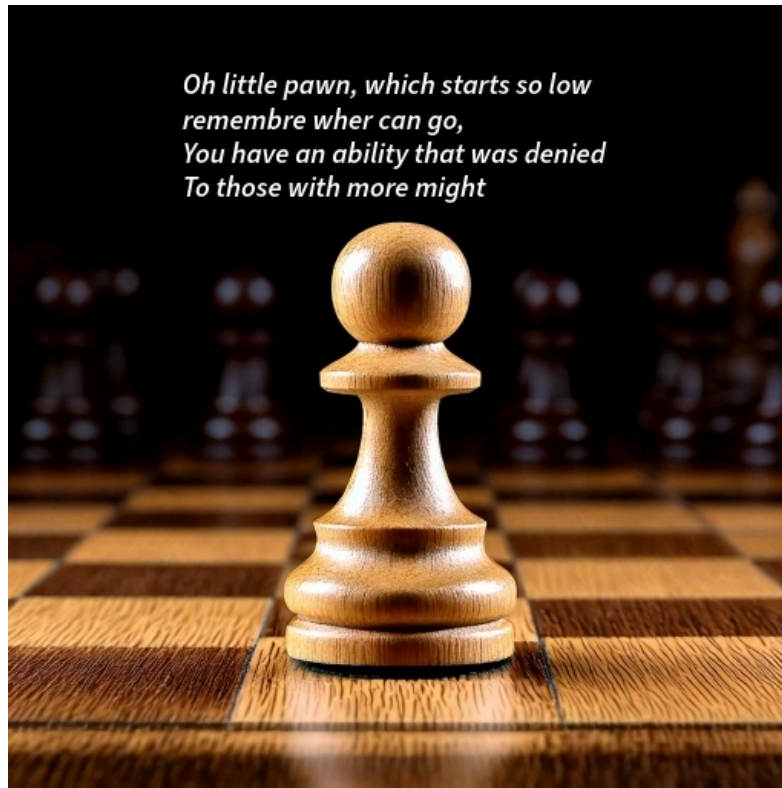
The pawn is the most fascinating piece on the chessboard. It has the lowest value yet the greatest potential. Before Philidor's focus on the power of the pawn, chess was focused on gambits and quick matting attacks. Philidor elevated the importance of the pawn. His famous quote, "The pawn is the soul of chess," is often quoted; however, the complete quote in context is:

"To play the pawns well; they are the soul of chess: it is they which uniquely determine the attack and the defense, and their good or bad arrangement depends entirely on the winning or losing of the game."

Philidor's insight fundamentally changed the game. Now, there are whole books on pawn structure, and you cannot open an endgame book without encountering pages and pages on king and pawn endgames – they are the stars of the endgame, and the rest of the pieces are supporting casts.

Aron Nimzowitsch went even further: he stated, "A passed pawn is a criminal which should be kept under lock and key." I agree wholeheartedly if you are speaking about my opponent's passed pawn, but when thinking about my own passed pawn, I see things differently. My passed pawn is a major asset that should be protected and nurtured to reach its full potential and will provide him with all the support he needs to queen.

Yet, Philidor, Nimzowitsch, and I are all outside observers; what is life like from a pawn's point of view? I tried to explore this idea through a poem.



*Oh little pawn, which starts so low  
remembre wher can go,  
You have an ability that was denied  
To those with more might*

It's true your path with difficulty is wrought  
Fearful choices that bring all your dreams to naught  
With eyes straining to the left or right  
Finding the best way to fight

And oh, the wait,  
With nothing to do  
But to sit in the danger zone  
Without a clue.

Your heart may envy those with more might  
Forgetting what should be its secret delight  
You can transform into whatever piece you want to be  
At the end of the board, there is a new life for thee.



## Chess Variations and Change: Reports from the Summer Chess Camps

By Christian Brickhouse

Like Abel wrote about a few issues ago, I notice a lot of our students playing chess variants, and during the summer camps this year I was surprised by the appetite for new takes on chess games. One camper asked to borrow the office copy of John Gollon's *Chess Variations: Ancient, Regional, and Modern* (1968) and read it in a single night! Chess variants are cool, and I couldn't help but think about how this process of play is how we got chess at all. Games, like languages, differ from place to place and are made up by the communities that play them. Seeing those students come up with new ways to play the game made me think of how the ancient game of Chaturanga spread and evolved over thousands of years to become games like Shogi, Xiangqi, and Chess.

But why should we take chess variants seriously, let alone the silly games kids come up with in their free time?

1. Chess variants give us fun ways to teach boring chess principles
2. Chess variants let students express their creativity within a formal, rigidly defined game
3. Chess variants teach design principles that will help students in the future

### Chess variants give us fun ways to teach boring chess principles

Abel Talamantez's article in our October newsletter does a great job laying out how effective chess variants are at teaching chess principles. In *Homecoming Chess*, students demonstrate how pieces move and how to set up the starting position while practicing turn taking. To old-hats like us, this can seem simple, but for a 6-year-old who might never have played a game like that, turn-taking is an important skill to practice. Having played it with Abel during the McClain Memorial tournament, I can say it's also quite fun!

Other chess variants popular online can help to teach more advanced principles like king safety, piece development, and control of the center. In *King of the Hill*, players can win by moving their king to one of the 4 center squares. But a player who runs their king out early will quickly learn about king safety as their opponent checkmates them in the center of the board. Other variants like *3 Check* or *Atomic Chess* teach similar principles in different ways. Students like variety and not everyone learns well from lectures, so these variants help keep even advanced topics engaging and exciting for students.

### **Chess variants let students express their creativity within a formal, rigidly defined game**

Kids should have fun. Everyone loses if chess becomes synonymous with killing fun, and the quickest way to kill fun is to crush a child's imaginative play. We must teach them an incredibly formal, rigidly defined game, but complex systems like chess do not require students to leave their whimsy at the door.

Within gaming circles, there has been a rise in *cooperative* games as an alternative to competitive games like chess. The appeal of these games is to work together with friends on a shared goal where players win and lose together against a situation instead of fighting each other. During the camp I saw two campers play what might be a cooperative chess variant: they played *Wedding*. The pawns ringed the outside of the board as guests, the rooks were the castle doors, the bishops officiated, the kings and queens entered, and the horses stayed outside. They played with the pieces, imagining them not as soldiers at war duty bound to follow their leader to the death, but as guests from distant lands joining each other to celebrate. They won together, their leaders forming a strong alliance to avoid war rather than wage it.

Instructors also have the opportunity to be creative and engage students in new ways. One camper snuck in some Pokemon cards, and during a break he and another student were playing around with them. Since we're at a chess camp, I tried to redirect them back to chess. A good way to do this is to try and combine the activity you want the student to do with the activity

they are already doing: but how do you combine chess and a trading card game? When I participated in the 2024 MIT Mystery Puzzle Hunt, there was a puzzle [Queen Marchesa to g4](#) which combined chess and Magic the Gathering. I told the campers: what if each piece represented a card? Just like in the card game the pieces would have hit points (HP) and they could attack each other to deal damage. When a piece runs out of HP, it is “captured”. The kids loved the idea and ran with it. They divided the cards and decided which piece was which card. They got to play chess with really powerful pieces and enjoyed the break from the typical games they had played the 4 days prior.

Fostering student creativity gives them opportunities to apply what they learned by creating new variants. During the chess camps, students sit through lectures about different chess tactics, including the power of double attacks. While walking around the camp and looking at games, I noticed two campers creating a chess variant which they called *Sniper Chess*. In their game, a piece is only captured if it is attacked twice. When it is captured, it is simply removed from the board. No other pieces move. These variant rules forced the campers to *only* use double attacks, and as a result they were forced to think about how to set up and defend against double attacks in a way that might be more intuitive to them than puzzles and lectures.

**Chess variants teach design principles that will help students in the future**  
While it would be great if every student we taught had a career in chess, the vast majority will go on to have more typical career paths. That doesn't mean chess cannot teach them valuable skills. In *The Game Believes in You* (2015), journalist Greg Toppo explores how video games can be valuable educational tools. The value, Toppo finds, is in the way games teach systems thinking. What happens if we take apart a system and put it back together again? By taking chess and tweaking it, students get to take apart the system and put it back together again using the kinds of critical thinking skills that scientists, engineers, artists, and designers require.

Thinking again about the double attack chess variant, *Sniper Chess*, the players ran into situations that their simple rule didn't have a great answer to. For example, let's imagine a pawn chain of Black pawns on the same

diagonal as a White queen and bishop battery. The first pawn in the chain is captured since it's double attacked, but that reveals the pawn behind. Does the now-leading pawn also get captured? As the campers found out, the answer has consequences for the strategies they come up with. If all of the pawns get captured, batteries become incredibly powerful. Maybe too powerful! But if only one gets removed, then what happens to the one behind it? Does it get removed at the end of White's next turn? At the end of Black's next turn?

I taught the campers something that might not help them in chess, but will help them if they go on to design more games: do play tests. For different rule sets, play a few moves or even games, and discuss which they think worked best. Different rules are different games, and as Golton said at the start of *Chess Variations*: "different people enjoy different games." We can't know which ones players will enjoy without testing them. And the only way to test them is to play.

The campers, spurred on by Gollon's *Chess Variations*, came up with ever more complex games. Since at least *Nieuchess* (1961), players have imagined what it would be like if capturing had an element of chance. After all, in war, the success of a battle is not guaranteed. This is a common motif in wargames like *Chainmail* (1971) or *Warhammer* (1983) where different pieces have different movement and attack patterns that are decided by dice rolls. In Tabletop Roleplaying Games like *Dungeons and Dragons* (1974), players get to design their own pieces, attacks, and "captures". Each time just a few tweaks. *Nieuchess* asked what if we added dice and played on a hexagonal board? *Chainmail* asked what if the board looked more like a real battlefield? *Dungeons & Dragons* asked what if we could customize the pieces?

At the start of camp when I said I was looking forward to one of my *Dungeons & Dragons* groups starting up, the teens perked up: they thought D&D was cool. Together we worked on an action resolution mechanic for chess based on the bounded accuracy system in *Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition* (2014). I supplied the 20-sided dice. We learned how to think about chess as a system. We looked at how to design the system so that a rook still felt more powerful than a pawn. We split on whether the king should have

guaranteed captures or not (important for resolving checks!). Below is what we came up with, and as the writer, I've taken some liberties to polish up the rules that I think worked best.

Materials: Chess Board, chess set, a 20-sided-die

Rules:

The game is the same as chess except the capturing rules are replaced by the following.

When a player wants to capture a piece they are threatening, they say their piece will attempt to capture an opponent's piece. For example, if a white bishop is threatening a black pawn, the white player would say "I'm going to try and capture your pawn with my bishop"

The attacker rolls a 20-sided-die and adds the attacking piece's value to the result of the roll to get the modified roll result. In our example, the value of a bishop is 3 and the player rolled a 13 so the modified roll result is 16.

If the modified roll result is 11 or higher, the capture succeeds. The captured piece is taken off the board and the attacking piece is placed on that square.

If the modified roll result is 10 or below, the capture fails. The attacking piece does not move and the attacked piece stays on the board. The attacking player's turn ends.

The value of a king is infinite, and it always succeeds in capturing other pieces.

The rules of check and checkmate are the same. A player in check must either move the king out of check, block the check with another piece, or capture the checking piece. If a player attempts to capture the checking piece and fails, they must move the king or block the check.

**Conclusion: don't brush off chess variants**



In Toppo's *The Game Believes in You*, he shares an anecdote from progressive educator and theorist Herbert R. Kohl in a 1974 publication. Kohl was observing a student teacher in a class, and the teacher scolded some children playing a chess variant. The teacher said that there is only one way to play chess, and the students would never be real chess players if they didn't learn to play by the rules. One of the players replied that she didn't want to be a real chess player, she just wanted to see what happened when you changed the rules. So what happened? She got yelled at for being curious. If she wants to play chess again, do you think she'll have a positive opinion of "real" chess players?

Chess is a variant, after all, and we continue to change the rules to this day. It wasn't until Lucena that the moves of the queen, pawn, and bishop came to be what we know now. Castling for Ruy Lopez was a regional variant known as the king's leap, with the modern form not standardized until the mid-1600s in France and England. The preface to the *USCF Official Rules of Chess, 7th edition*, points out that it was common across chess clubs in the 1700s to restrict promotion of a pawn to only pieces captured during the game, something not ever part of any English rule set. The 2022 revision to the USCF Rules clarifies exactly how a pawn promotes (Rule 9D).

Before coming to work at Mechanics' Institute, I studied how small individual differences in speech added up across communities and generations to evolve into regional accents and new languages, so it's no surprise that I'm drawn to the way Chess evolved from and into other games. With language, we see the kids drive these changes. They want to play and explore. Push the boundaries of what is and imagine what could be. Chess education gives us the opportunity to foster this growth by playing games that show chess as a living thing with a thriving community they get to be part of, not a fossil from the 1400s.

## The Mechanics' Institute Chess Set - Part I

By Alex Robins

It came to my attention recently that many of our players are not aware that our chess club has its very own chess set. Unfortunately, the club no longer has a complete set of the originals and the history of this set is still hazy to me but I plan to do some research and report back to our readers in the coming months.

While we don't have a complete copy of the originals, reproductions of the historic set - are sold by [House of Staunton](#) with a portion of the proceeds coming back to our club. Recently our trustee Mason Duke donated one of these sets to the club where it is now prominently displayed and quite an attractive set. Check it out in the display cabinet next time you are here!



The reproduction set in all its glory!





You can see that the reproduction is not actually 1:1 with these originals.



Look at the brickwork!



Capablanca and AJ Fink playing with the set in 1916.





The patina on this knight!

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**Sam in Samarkand: King's Indian Games from the  
FIDE Grand Swiss**

By GM Sam Shankland

Our GM in Residence will be analyzing his games from the FIDE Grand Swiss and teaching us about one of the newer weapons in his repertoire, the King's Indian Defense!



□ Suleymanli,Aydin Elshan

■ Shankland,Samuel L

FIDE Grand Swiss (11)

[Shankland,Sam]

E90

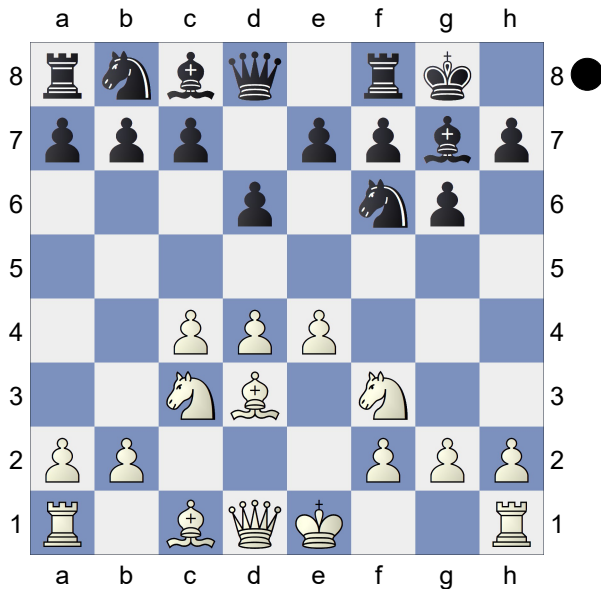
2609

2670

15.09.2025

After the previous disaster, I got 2 whites in a row. Both games I faced the Petroff, my opponents played well, and I never really got a chance to make anything happen. With the last round coming up, I was not feeling too optimistic. but when I got to play the King's Indian, I at least felt like I would be able to get an interesting position.

**1.d4** This was the first surprise. I had expected 1.e4, and had not reviewed for 1.d4 at all. But, I was feeling optimistic enough to give my new best friend another try. **1...Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 d6 5.e4 0-0 6.Bd3**



Aydin blitzed this move out. To be honest, I had literally never checked it, and was on my own this early in the game. I had checked 5.Bd3 with White's knight still on g1 and hoping to go Nge2, but this was a totally fresh position to me. That being said, I felt that most of the key themes looked similar to some of the Petrosian lines like we saw in my

game with Sargissian, and quickly I got a position that I felt pretty good about.

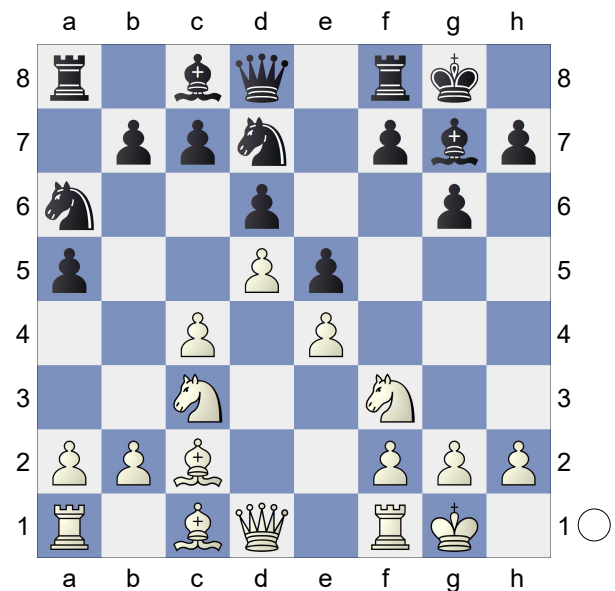
**6...e5 7.d5 Nfd7**

[ 7...a5 This should be the more accurate move order, as it rules out h2-h4. But I was freestyling, and chose Nfd7 instead, if for no other reason to try to get my opponent out of his concrete preparation. ]

**8.0-0**

[ 8.h4!? There was no need to allow this option. ]

**8...a5 9.Bc2 Na6!**



Remaining flexible. My point is that I might want to play with Ndc5, but I can also consider playing f5 instead, in which case I will want to preserve the possibility of Nf6. **10.a3**

[ 10.Be3 This move would make perfect sense against a Ndc5 plan, but now my added flexibility comes in handy. f5! ( 10...Ndc5? 11.a3! The bishop being on c2 rather than e2 means I can never hope to accomplish the a5-a4 advance. As such, Rb1 comes next, and then b4, and I will start to look a bit silly. )

**11.exf5 gxf5 12.Ng5 Nf6!±**

The added flexibility to bring my knight to f6 helps my position a lot. Next up

will be f4. ]

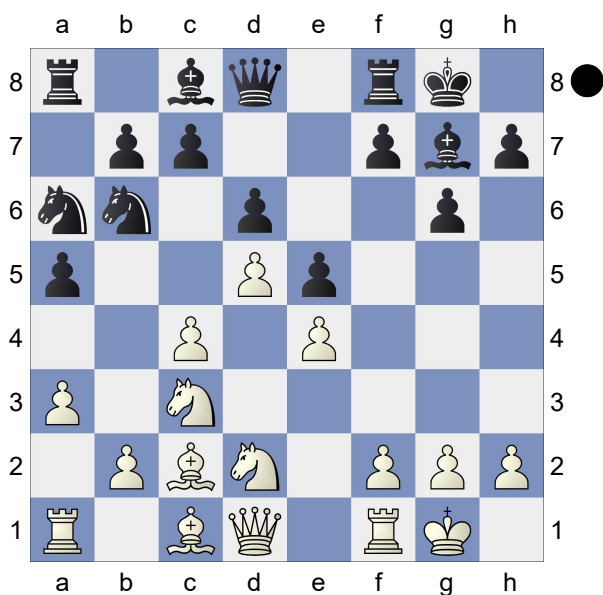
**10...Nb6!** A typical theme. Black directly targets the c4-pawn, which proves annoying to defend. **11.Nd2**

[ 11.Qe2 Bg4! It's not so easy to prevent Bxf3, when White will have to choose between allowing his kingside structure to be compromised or giving me the c4-pawn. 12.b3 f5!

Black has a lot of counterplay. The bishop is super strong on g4. ]

[ 11.b3 This was best, but it's not an easy move to make. a4?

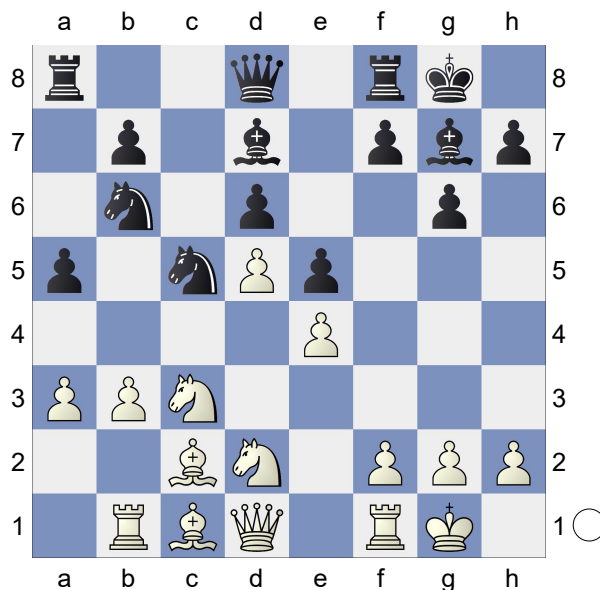
The computer prefers f5, which makes a lot of counterplay and Black should be fine in human terms. but this is the move I was planning, and I suspect it is the one my opponent feared when he chose to avoid b2-b3. Black undermines the c4-pawn. 12.b4! Nxc4 13.Nxa4 b5 It looks like I should be good to go, as the knight is hit, and if it moves, Nxb4 is coming. 14.Bd3!± I suspect this is what my opponent missed. White stops bxa4 by counterattacking the c4-knight, and Black is in a bad way. ]



**11...Nc5?!** This felt natural to me, but it was not the best option.

[ 11...f5! I was interested that the machine strongly preferred to send the kingside. After 12.Rb1 f4 13.b4 My understanding was that my position should be quite bad thanks to my clumsy knights, and I didn't really believe I had enough play on the kingside. But, this was a misunderstanding. The problem White is facing is that his own coordination is very poor as well, as he really has no way to try to accomplish the c4-c5 break. It all comes down to the knight on d2. Had the knight been on f3 still and Ne1-d3 was a possibility, all of my fears would be justified. As is, c4-c5 really is not going to happen. g5! g4, Rf6, Bf8... Black can play in the style of the Mar del Plata, and he should have a very good position. c5 will not come, and the kingside pawns are moving. ]

**12.b3** No choice on this one- White could not allow a5-a4. **12...c6 13.Rb1 cxd5 14.cxd5 Bd7**



This was the position I was aiming for. My thought was that by exchanging off the c-pawns, I have made b3-b4 a total non issue. I can take it, put my knight on a4, and then quickly slam Qc7 and Rfc8

with way too much queenside pressure. It was only once this position was on the board that I realized Nd2-c4 is a possibility. **15.a4?! This is too slow, and now I am allowed to get my bishop to h6.**

[ 15.b4? This would have justified my play. axb4 16.axb4 Nca4! 17.Nxa4 Nxa4± With Qc7, Rfc8, Bb5 on the way, Black's initiative will quickly grow out of control. ]

[ 15.Nc4! This was the way. White tried for something like this in the game, but with my bishop on h6, things were not nearly as clear. Qc7 ( 15...Nxc4 This is best and it was my plan, but it definitely is not enough to equalize. 16.bxc4 f5 17.Be3 Rc8 I have some counterplay, but White is undeniably better. ) 16.Be3± Nxb6 followed by b4 is not a small threat. I have to take on c4. Nxc4 17.bxc4 Now Bxc5 is coming next. The difference in quality between our respective bishops is very notable! Rab8 18.Qd2 Rb2, Rfb1... White's position plays itself. ]

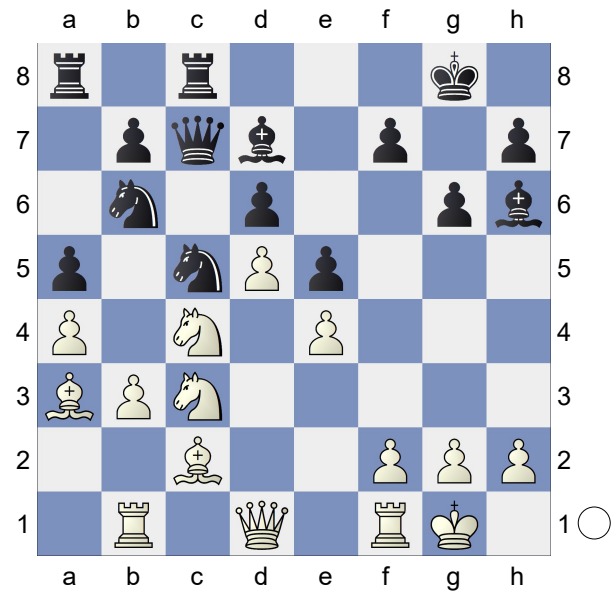
**15...Bh6! 16.Ba3**

[ 16.Nc4? Bxc1 17.Qxc1 Nxc4 18.bxc4± The same structure without dark squared bishops is a completely different world. White has no way to challenge the c5-knight, and as such, he has no active plan and should just be worse. f5! ]

**16...Qc7 17.Nc4 Rfc8!**

(Diagram)

I was very happy to abstain from taking on c4. And now, since White did not get his bishop to e3, he doesn't have any way to force the tension to resolve by threatening Nxb6 followed by b4. **18.Kh1** This move was a little mysterious. I'm not sure what he had in mind. **18...Ra6**



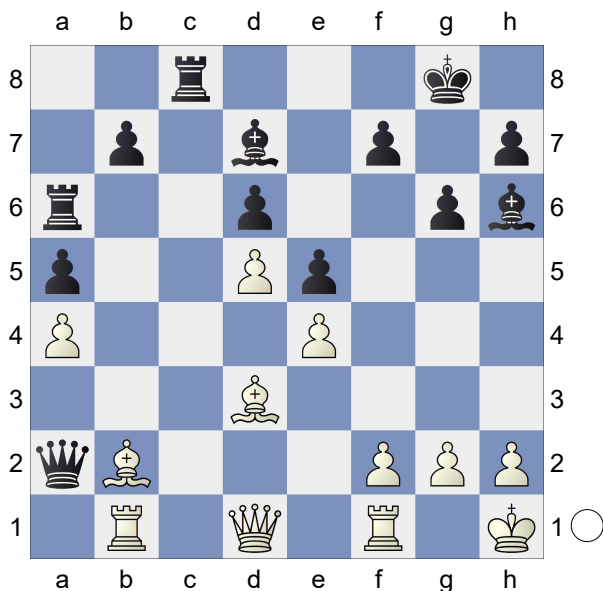
**19.Bb2** A subtly threatening move. If White is allowed to play Na3 next, my position will be miserable. Taking on c4 now is not so bad, but I saw a better option, even if I played too ambitiously a move later. **19...Ncxa4 20.Nxa4 Nxa4?**

[ 20...Bxa4 Objectively, this was prudent. 21.Nxd6! An annoying desperado. Qxd6 ( 21...Bxb3? This almost works, but I had calculated well. 22.Nxc8 Bxc2 23.Ne7+! Kf8 24.d6! The last 2 moves were the only way to avoid a horrible position. But... now Black can resign. Let's not do that! ) 22.bxa4 Nc4 23.Bd3 Nxb2 24.Rxb2 Rb6= This struck me as a dead draw. Opposite bishops, even pawns, my queenside mass blockaded, his d-pawn blockaded, nobody will do anything for the rest of the game. This is true, and it is what I should have gone for. But I decided to be too ambitious again. Luckily though, this time I went unpunished. ]

**21.bxa4 Qxc4 22.Bd3 Qa2**

[ 22...Qxa4 The computer claims this offers some holding chances, but it was not my plan. If I wanted to hold, I would have taken with the bishop on

a4. 23.Qxa4 Bxa4 24.Bxa6 bxa6  
25.Bc1 Bf8 26.Be3 f5! Black seems  
more or less okay, though I don't love  
the position. ]



I was a bit surprised when my opponent  
was thinking here, as I thought Bxa6  
was absolutely forced. I was even more  
surprised when he did not play it.

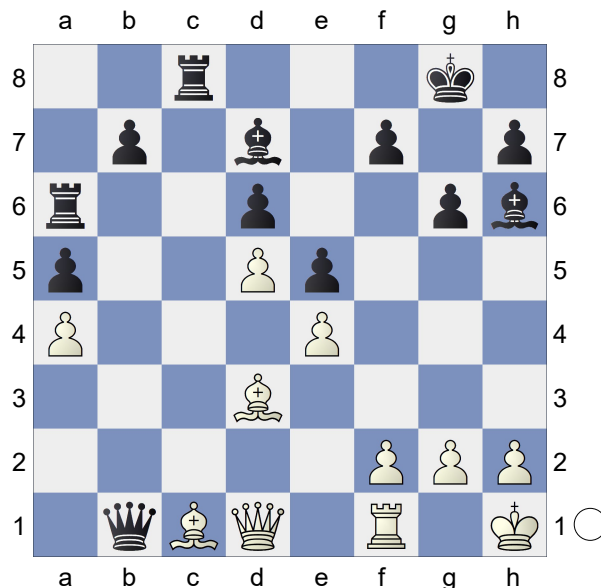
**23.Bc1??** I could scarcely believe my  
eyes when I saw this move, which I had  
not even considered. Black has a nice  
position in more ways than one, but I  
found the best one, by far.

[ 23.Bxa6! Of course this was the way.  
bxa6 I thought I was fine here. White's  
b2-bishop is super clumsy, I already  
have one pawn for the exchange,  
Bxa4 cannot be prevented, and then  
the bishop comes to c2. But I had  
missed an important idea. 24.Qf3!  
I had seen this move, but somehow  
had completely missed that after  
Bxa4? White has ( 24...Qxa4  
I should prefer this one, but now that  
b1 is not hanging, White can fix his  
coordination. 25.Bc1! Bf8 26.Be3  
f5± I'm not dead or anything and not  
without counterplay, but I definitely  
don't have enough for an exchange.

White's rooks are really good. )

25.Qh3! With a winning fork. ( 25.Qa3  
I was expecting this one, when Black  
should be fine in the resulting  
endgame. Qxa3 26.Bxa3 Bc2  
27.Rb6 Bxe4 Rxd6 is well met with  
Bf8, and Black is very much fine. )]

**23...Qxb1!**



Always examine all checks and captures!  
This is not even a sacrifice, as I get a  
rook, bishop, and pawn for the queen.  
And this allows me to consolidate and  
keep the extra pawn I had taken before.  
Dragging White's bishop to b1 keeps my  
rook safe. **24.Bxb1 Rxc1 25.Qe2**  
**Rxf1+ 26.Qxf1 Bxa4!** The machine  
gives some -0.7 here. This is misleading.  
In human terms, White is completely  
busted. He has no counterplay at all and  
can only wait for the queenside pawns  
to decide the game. **27.g3**

[ 27.Qc4 Rb6! Not too difficult, but an  
important detail to see all the same.  
Rb8 comes next, the bishop sits on f8,  
and Black is completely safe with  
zero weaknesses. Eventually, the  
queenside pawns should go through. ]

**27...Rb6 28.f4 Bd7! 29.fxe5**

[ 29.Qc1 Bh3 White's king is  
permanently unsafe, and Black should



easily win by blending mating threats with pushing the queenside pawns. ]

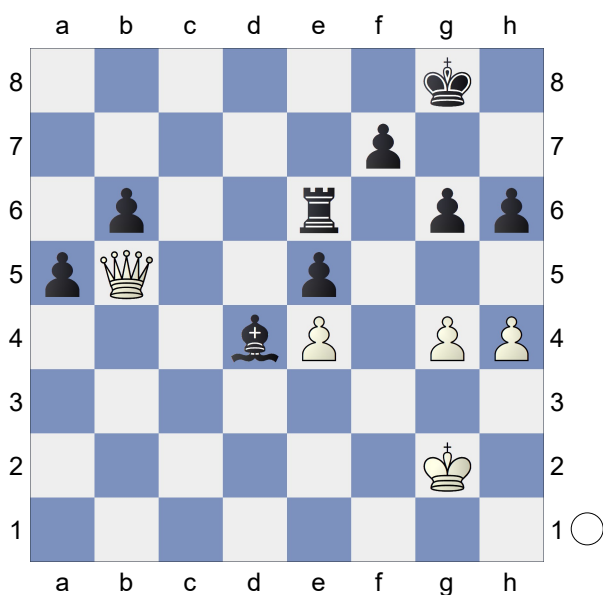
**29...dxe5 30.d6**

[ 30.Ba2 Rb2! White is not in time to get d6 in. 31.Bc4 ( 31.Qc4 b5!; 31.Qa1 Rc2 Rc2 incoming. ) 31...b5! ]

**30...Rxd6! The simplest. 31.Ba2 Be6**

**32.Bxe6 Rxe6-+ All too easy. I play b6, everything is protected, my king is forever safe, and eventually the pawns go through. 33.Qb5 b6 34.g4 Be3!**

Once the bishop sits on d4, both b6 and e5 will be defended, and my rook will be free to invade. **35.Kg2 h6 36.h4 Bd4**



**37.h5**

[ 37.g5 hxg5 38.hxg5 Be3! I win yet another pawn and White cannot stop the bishop from regrouping to e7-c5-d4 again. ]

[ 37.Kg3 I was expecting this one, when White will at least be able to play g5. That being the case, he in theory has a perpetual with Qd8-f6 in some cases, which restricts my rook's mobility. Still, Black wins easily enough. Rf6 This was my plan. Other moves work, but I like this one. 38.g5 hxg5 39.hxg5 Rf4 40.Qc6 Kg7 41.Kh3 a4! Distracting the queen, who has to take. 42.Qxa4 Rxe4

Next up is Re4-f4-f5, the bishop can regroup as needed, and g5 will fall. Then there is nothing further to discuss. ]

**37...g5! Now once my king sits on g7, White can play bughouse with his queen and still can never give a safe check. All of my pawns are forever defended, and my rook is free to come in and end the game. 38.Kf3 Rf6+ 39.Ke2 Rf2+ 40.Kd3 Rf3+ 41.Kd2 Ra3**

White resigned rather than waiting for Ra1 and a4-a3-a2 to end the game. I was a bit too ambitious when taking Nxa4 instead of Bxa4, and I should have put more weight on the f7-f5 advance early on, but apart from that, I think I played fairly well to end a very painful tournament on a high note.

**0-1**



## **Annotated Games from the TNM**

By IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from the Fall TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the [Tournament Archive](#).

**Bhatia,Aadit** **B41**  
**2246**  
 **Rajaram,Raghu** **1839**  
 2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (2.1) 11.11.25  
*[Winslow,Elliott]*

Early round upset, or half-upset, as  
 Raghu Rajaram holds master Aadit  
 Bhatia to a draw. **1.e4 c5 1:37 2.Nf3 7**  
**e6 11 3.d4 6 cxd4 10 4.Nxd4 5 a6 6**  
**5.Be2 1:32 Rare**

[ 5.Nc3 ]  
 [ 5.Bd3 ]  
 [ 5.c4 ]

**5...Nf6 4:33 6.Qd3 3:03 (Very rare!)**  
**6...Nc6 3:04**

[Black can (and should?) make it a  
 Hedgehog; this game is a  
 quintessential punishment of passive  
 White play by one of the current  
 superstars: 6...d6 7.c4 Nbd7 8.Nc3  
 b6 9.Be3 Bb7 10.Qc2 Be7 11.0-0  
 0-0 12.Rfd1 Qc7 13.Rac1 Rac8  
 14.b3 Qb8 15.Qb1 Rfd8 16.Bd3  
 Qa8 17.f3 h5 18.Bf1 h4 19.Bg5 h3  
 20.g3 d5 21.exd5 Nxd5 22.Bxe7  
 Nxe7 23.Bxh3 Ne5 24.Bg2 Nxf3+  
 25.Nxf3 Bxf3 26.Bxf3 Qxf3  
 27.Rxd8+ Rxd8 28.Qe4 Qf6 29.Qe3  
 Nf5 30.Qxb6 Rd3 31.Ne4 Qb2  
 32.Rf1 Ne3 33.Qb8+ Kh7 34.Nf2  
 Qe2 35.Rb1 Qf3 36.Qf4 Beerdsen,T  
 (2479)-Andreikin,D (2726) Titled  
 Tuesday, May 26 2020 0-1 ]

**7.Nxc6 4:42 bxc6 3:24 8.0-0 2:24 Qc7**  
**8:18**

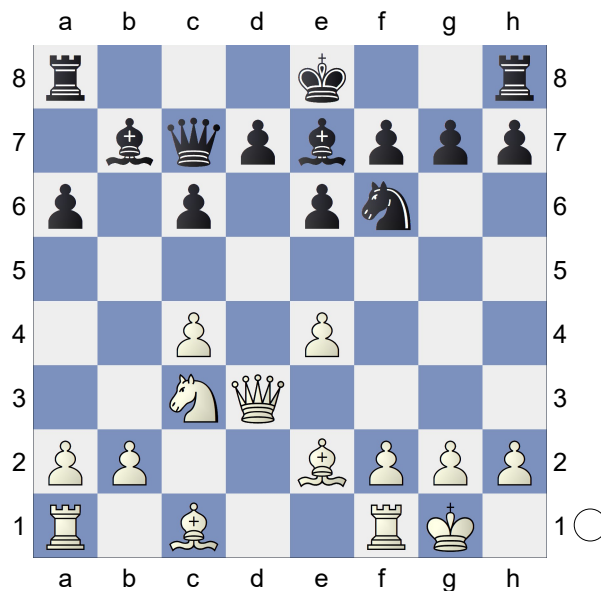
[ 8...d5 ]

**9.c4 2:55 Bb7 5:00**

[ 9...Be7 ]  
 [ 9...Bc5 ]  
 [ 9...d5 ]

**10.Nc3 1:12 Be7 4:01**

(Diagram)



**11.Be3± 5:21 /=**

[ 11.f4 d5 12.e5 Nd7 13.Qg3 0-0  
 14.a3 f6 15.Qg4 Bc5+ 16.Kh1 Rae8  
 17.exf6 Nxf6 18.Qg5 Bd6 19.b4 c5  
 20.b5 d4 21.bxa6 Bxa6 22.Nb5  
 Bxb5 23.cxb5 c4 24.Bf3 e5 25.Bc6  
 Re7 26.fxe5 Rxe5 27.Qd2 Rh5  
 28.h3 Bc5 29.Qe2 d3 30.Qe6+ Qf7  
 31.Rxf6 gxf6 32.Qg4+ Kh8 33.Bf3  
 Re5 34.Bb2 Re7 35.Qf5 Bd6  
 36.Bd5 Qg6 37.Qf3 Re2 38.Bd4  
 Be5 39.Bxe5 Rxe5 40.Bxc4 d2  
 Rumana,F (1540)-Premanath,D  
 (1863) Dhaka 2019 0-1 ]

**11...0-0 4:26 12.c5 6:29**

[ 12.Rac1 ]

**12...a5 13:26**

[ 12...d5 13.cxd6 Bxd6 14.f4 e5  
 15.f5 c5 ]

**13.Qc2 2:17 Ba6 4:34 14.Rfd1 38**  
**Rfb8?! 5:59**

[ 14...Bxe2 15.Qxe2 a4= ]

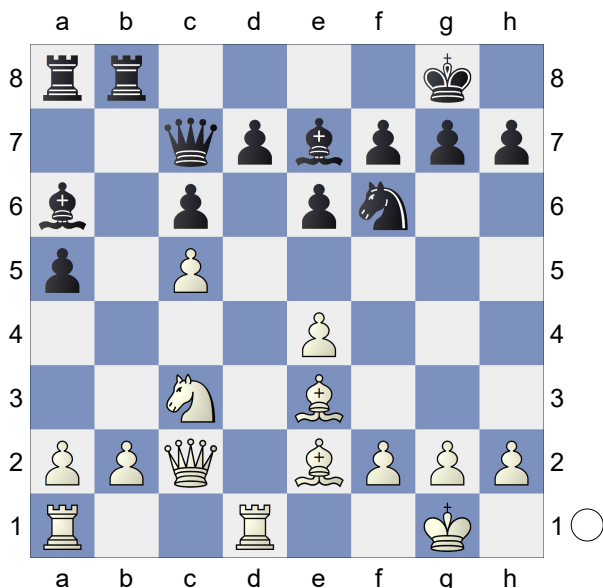
(Diagram)

**15.Bxa6? 10:12**

[ 15.Bf3± ]

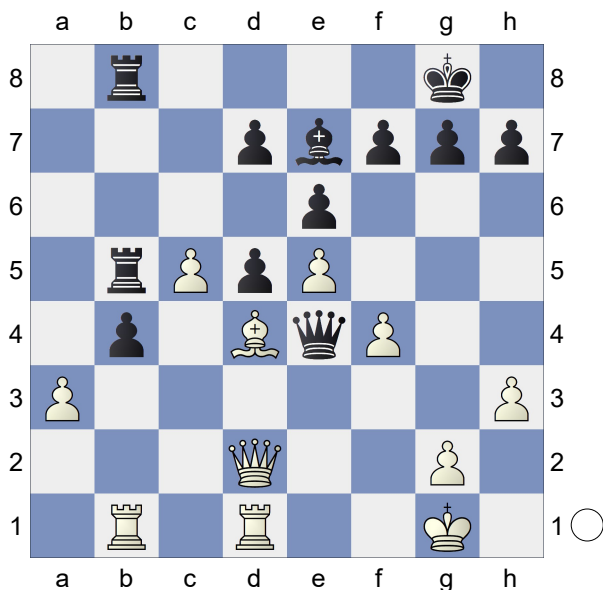
**15...Rxa6 11**

[ 15...Ng4! 16.Bd3 Qxh2+ 17.Kf1



Nxe3+ 18.fxe3 Bxc5 19.Re1 Bxe3!  
20.Rxe3 Qh1+ 21.Kf2 Qxa1=  
(-0.16/d27) ]

16.h3± 7:32 Ra7 5:36 17.b3 7:05 Qe5  
6:02 18.f4 4:38 Qh5= 9:31 19.e5 1:09  
Nd5 1:52 20.Nxd5 12 cxd5 5:17  
21.Bd4 2:11 Rc7= 1:08 22.a3 5:34 Qg6  
4:22 23.Qc3 2:19 Rcb7 3:30 24.Rab1  
6:53 Rb5 1:10 25.b4 50 Qe4 56  
26.Qd2 17 axb4 1:15



27.axb4?? 35

[ 27.Rxb4!± ]

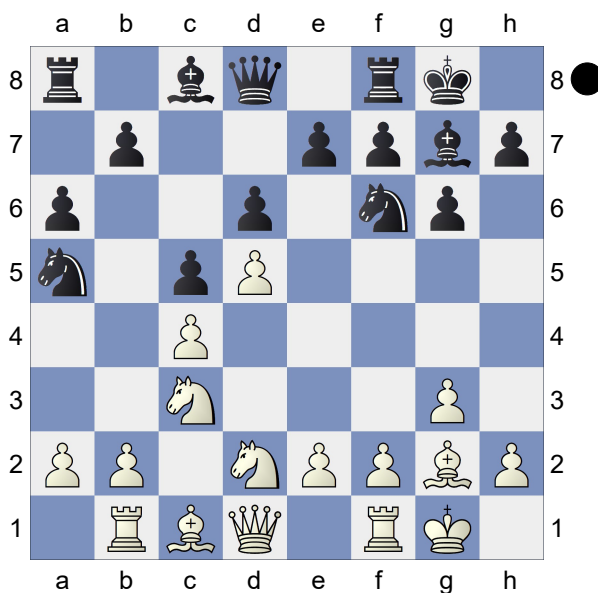
27...Bxc5! 37 28.Bxc5 3:21 Rxc5-+ 3  
Raghu kept his head in a difficult position,  
but why, now that he's got a suddenly

\*won\* game, does he agree to a draw?  
He has a little more than four minutes to  
Aadit's 21 minutes.

[Perhaps he overlooked 28...Rxc5  
29.Re1 Rc2! ( 29...Qg6 is also won )]  
1/2-1/2

E66  
□ Winslow, Elliott 2207  
■ Perlov, Daniel Robert 1826  
2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (2.2) 11.11.25  
[Winslow, Elliott]

I'm always happy to play into something  
I knew half a century ago -- even if it  
turns out a "few" things have happened  
since then. In any case, we both had  
our knowledge of this line refreshed, to  
my favor it turned out. 1.d4 38 Nf6 9  
2.c4 6 g6 5 3.g3 2:14 Bg7 7 4.Bg2 6  
d6 5 5.Nf3 19 0-0 11 6.0-0 5 Nc6 12  
7.Nc3 17 a6 13 8.d5 1:23 Na5 31  
9.Nd2 6 c5 14 10.Rb1 3:00  
[ 10.Qc2 is the old, main line. ]



I decided back in the 70s or maybe even  
in the 60s (those are 1900 years, not my  
age) that this move sidestepped some  
sharp lines in the Fianchetto Panno.

**10...Bd7 4:47**

[ 10...Rb8 ]

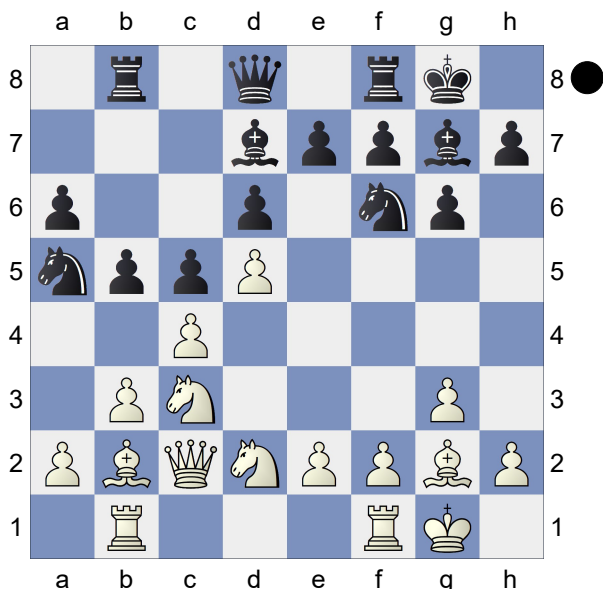
[ 10...b5!? Now \*this\* I hadn't considered. Nor does Stockfish think it's very good! So we have to wonder (1) What was Gadir's deep idea if there was one (2) Why didn't Sam take the pawn? (best by SF) 11.b3 Rb8 12.Qc2 e6 13.e4 exd5 14.cxd5 b4 15.Nd1 Bd7 16.Bb2 Bb5 17.Re1 Re8 18.Ne3 Rc8 19.h3 Nd7 20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.a4 bxa3 22.Qc3+ f6 23.Ra1 Ne5 24.Rxa3 Nb7 25.Ndc4 Qc7 26.f4 Nd7 27.h4 Re7 28.h5 Nd8 29.g4 Bxc4 30.Nxc4 Nb6 31.g5 Kg8 32.gxf6 Re8 33.Rxa6 Nxc4 34.bxc4 Nf7 35.hxg6 hxg6 36.Bh3 Ra8 37.Qg3 Nh8 38.Be6+ 1-0 (38) Sevian,S (2689)-Guseinov,G (2636) Chess.com INT 2024 ]

**11.Qc2 4:10 b5 4:35 12.b3 16**

Black gets this in, but now what? In all of the Panno Variation (...Nc6 & ...a6), Black struggles to justify the knight on a5; usually with some amazing tactical line. If he can't make something happen, then it dies on the vine.

[ 12.cxb5 axb5 13.b4 cxb4 14.Rxb4 ]

**12...Rb8 4:49 13.Bb2 2:02**



**bx c4 10:51**

[ 13...e6!? 14.dxe6 Bxe6 ( 14...fxe6 15.Nce4 Bc6 16.Bxf6 Bxf6 17.Qd3 Be5 18.Rfd1± ) 15.Nd5 Bf5 16.Bxf6

**A) 16...Bxc2?** 17.Bxd8 Rbxd8 ( 17...Bxb1 18.Bxa5+- ) 18.Rbc1 Bf5 19.Ne7+ Kh8 20.Nxf5;

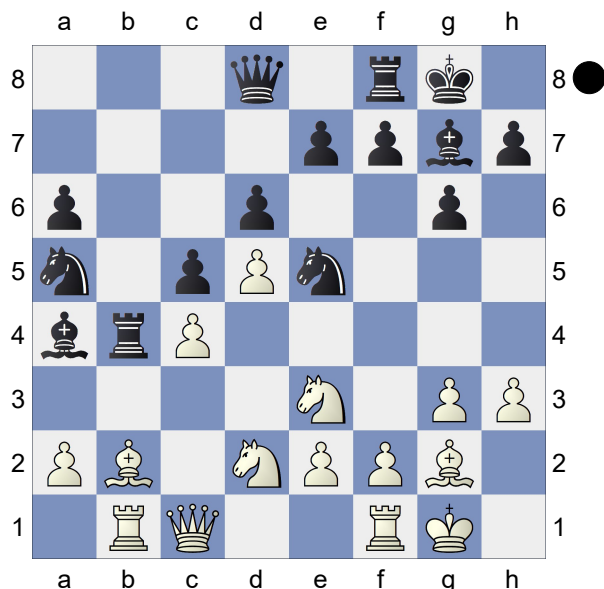
**B) 16...Bxf6** 17.Ne4 Be5 ( 17...Bd4 18.Rfd1 Kh8 19.cxb5 axb5 20.Rxd4 cxd4 21.Qd2 Bxe4 22.Qxd4+ f6 23.Qxe4± ) 18.Ne3 Be6 19.Rfd1 ( 19.h4!? ) ]

[ 13...e5!? ]

**14.bxc4 4 Ng4 24**

[ Relevant: 14...Qc7 15.Ba1 ( 15.Nd1!± Stockfish 17.1 ) 15...Rxb1 ( 15...Rb4!? ) 16.Rxb1 Rb8 17.h3?! ( 17.Rc1! ) 17...Bf5?! ( 17...Rb4 ) 18.e4 ( 18.Rxb8+! Qxb8 19.Qc1± ) 18...Bc8 ( 18...Rxb1+ ) 19.Ne2 (better some lateral rook move) Rxb1+ 20.Qxb1= Qb7± 21.Qxb7?! ( 21.Qc1± ) 21...Nxb7 22.Bc3 Nd7= 23.f4 Nb6 24.Bf1 Na4 25.Bxg7 Kxg7 26.Kf2 Na5 27.Ke3 e6 28.Nc3?? Well that's just stupid Nxc3 0-1 (28) Novosel,L (2353)-Nazari,A (2425) Titled Tuesday, Apr 1, 2025 ]

**15.h3 5:38 Ne5 56 16.Nd1 2:04 Rb4 7:24 17.Ne3 1:44 Ba4 16:36 18.Qc1 12**



**Qb8?!N 10:14**



[A better try: 18...Qb6 19.Bc3 Rxb1 20.Nxb1 Bh6 ( 20...Rb8 21.Qa3 Naxc4 22.Nxc4 Nxc4 23.Qxa4 Qb5 24.Qc2 Ne5 25.Na3 1-0, Kolesar,M (2100)-Slavinsky,R (1921) SVK-ch Seniors 65, Tatranske Matliare 2025 ) 21.Qa3 Bxe3 22.Qxa4 Naxc4 23.Bxe5 Bxf2+ 24.Rxf2 Nxe5 25.Qb3 Qa7 26.Nd2 c4 27.Qc3 Rb8 28.Be4 Qb6 29.Nf3 Nxf3+ 30.Qxf3 f5 31.Bc2 Qb2 32.e4 Qc1+ 33.Kg2 Rb2 34.Qd1 Qe3 35.exf5 Rxa2 36.fxg6 hxg6 37.Qg4 Qxf2+ 38.Kxf2 Rxc2+ 39.Ke3 Kh7 40.Qh4+ Kg8 41.Qxe7 Rc3+ 42.Kf4 1-0, Durarbayli, V (2620)-Sai,K (2409) PRO League Stage Chess.com INT 7 Feb 2019 ]

**19.Ba1? 5:11**

[ 19.Bc3!+- Nd7 20.g4 ]

**19...Rc8? 4:16**

[ 19...Rxb1 20.Qxb1 ( 20.Nxb1?! Nf3+ 21.exf3 Bxa1 22.Nc3 Bb2 23.Qd2 Qb4 24.Rb1 Nxc4 25.Nxc4 Qxc3 26.Rxb2 Qxc4 27.Bf1= Qd4 28.Qxd4 cxd4 29.Rb4 Bd7 30.Rxd4 ) 20...Qxb1 21.Rxb1 Nd7 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.f4 Rb8 24.Rxb8 Nxb8± /= ]

**20.f4? 6:03**

[ 20.Bc3+- f5 21.Re1 ]  
[ 20.Kh1!?+- Rxb1 21.Nxb1 Nd3 22.Qa3 Bxa1 23.Qxa4 Qb4 24.Qd7 ]

**20...Nd7? 4:46**

[ 20...Rxb1 21.Qxb1□ Qxb1 22.Rxb1 Nd7 23.Bxg7 Kxg7 24.Ng4 Rb8 25.Rxb8 Nxb8 26.e4 Bd1 27.Ne3 Be2= ]

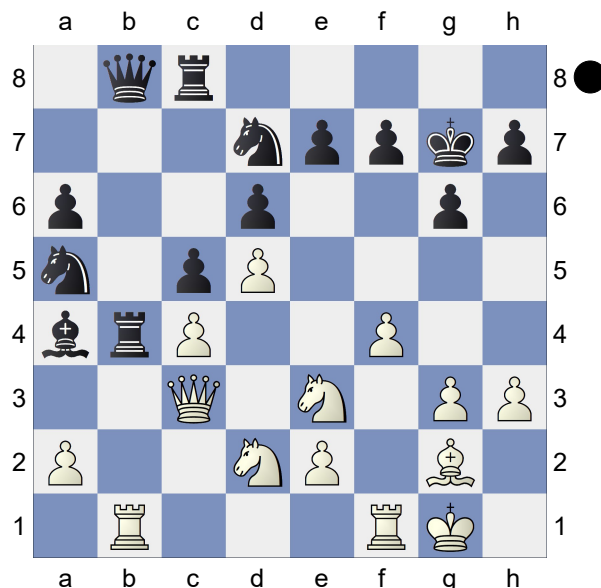
**21.Bxg7 33 Kxg7 6 22.Qc3+- 1:53**

(Diagram)

**Kg8 56**

[ 22...f6 23.g4+- ( 23.h4 h5 24.Bh3+- ) ]

**23.Ng4+- 4:42**



[ 23.a3 ]

[ 23.g4 ]

**23...Nf6?! 2:39**

[ 23...f6 24.Nf2+- Nxc4 25.Qxc4! Rxc4 26.Rxb8 Rxb8 27.Nxc4 ]

**24.Nxf6+ 2:34 exf6 6 25.a3 1:21 Rxb1 3:08**

[ 25...Nb3 26.axb4 cxb4+- ]

**26.Rxb1 5 Qc7 14 27.Ne4+- 28 Qd8 6:01 28.Nxf6+ 32 Kf8 12 29.Nxh7+ 1:03 Kg8 7 30.Nf6+ 29 Kf8 8 31.Ng4 2:11 Bd7 2:40 32.Nf2 58 Kg8 57 33.e4 35 Qc7 53 34.g4 1:40 Re8 2:13 35.g5 47 Nb7 1:22 36.e5 4:48 dxe5 1:05 37.fxe5 20 Rxe5 3:10 38.Rxb7 2:27 1-0**

**E52**

□ **Seshadri,Sudarshan**

**2010**

■ **Lavi,Eilon**

**2120**

2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (2.3) 11.11.25

[Winslow,Elliott]

Lavi joins Winslow in an early lead at 2-0 with this, another complicated knight ending. **1.d4 3 Nf6 10 2.c4 8 e6 21 3.Nc3 37 Bb4 9 4.Qc2 30 d5 1:19 5.e3 3:40**

[ 5.cxd5 is still the main move, when

at least Black has to choose which way to recapture! ]

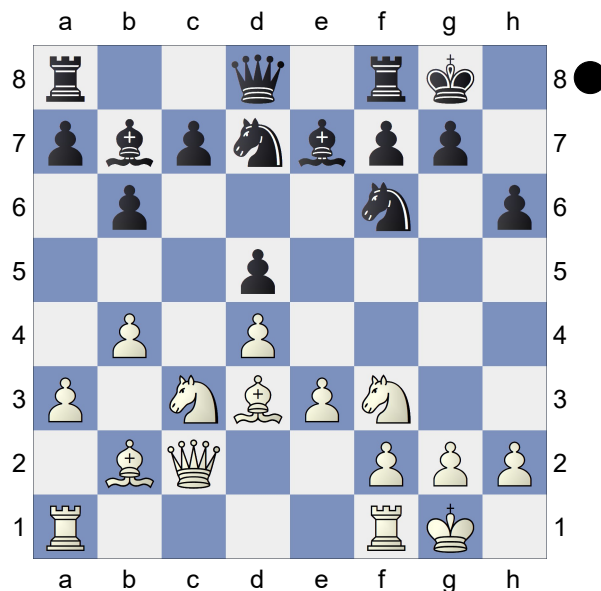
[ 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 0-0 7.e3 ( 7.Bg5; 7.Nf3 ) 7...c5 8.dxc5 Ne4 9.Qc2 a5 10.cxd5 exd5 11.Nf3 Na6 12.Nd4 Bd7 13.Bd3 Naxc5 14.Bxe4 Nxe4 15.0-0 Qb6 16.b3 Rfc8 17.Qb2 Qg6 18.f3 Nc5 19.Qe2 a4 20.bxa4 Rxa4 21.Bd2 Rc4 22.Bb4 Nd3 23.Kh1 Ba4 24.f4 Qe4 25.Qf3 Qxf3 26.gxf3 Bd7 27.f5 Nxb4 28.axb4 Rxb4 29.Rfb1 Rxb1+ 30.Rxb1 Rb8 31.Rb6 Kf8 32.Kg2 Ke7 33.f6+ gxf6 34.Kf2 h5 35.h4 Ra8 36.Rxb7 Ra2+ 37.Kg3 Ra1 38.Kg2 Ra2+ 39.Kg3 Ra1 40.Ne2 Re1 41.Nf4 Kd6 42.Rb6+ Bc6 43.Kf2 Rh1 44.Nxh5 Rxh4 45.Nxf6 d4 46.exd4 Rxd4 47.Ke3 Ra4 48.Ne4+ Kc7 49.Rb3 Bxe4 50.fxe4 Kd6 51.Kf4 Ke7 52.Rb7+ Ke6 53.Rb6+ Ke7 54.Rb7+ Ke6 55.Rb6+ ½-½ (55) Nakamura,H (2816)-Gukesh, D (2752) Clutch Championship, Saint Louis Oct 29, 2025 ]

**5...0-0 24 6.Nf3 12 b6 1:40 7.a3 2:29 Be7 1:04 8.cxd5 35 exd5 1:52 9.Bd3 1:25 Bb7 52 10.0-0 37 Nbd7 1:31 11.b4 9:03 h6 4:05**

[ 11...c5! is best by a chunk according to Stockfish. It'll be one of the strange isolated queen pawn positions where Black's pieces aren't poised for kingside attack, but they are developed. And a knight coming to c5 and e4 is not to be ignored. 12.bxc5 bxc5 13.Rb1 Rb8 14.Ne5 g6 15.f4 Qc7 16.a4 c4 17.Be2 Ba8 18.Bd2 Rxb1 19.Rxb1 Rb8 20.Bf3 Rxb1+ 21.Qxb1 a6 22.Nxd7 Qxd7 23.Qb8+ Qd8 24.Qa7 a5 25.Na2 Bc6 26.Bxa5 Qe8 27.Bc7 Bxa4 28.Be5 Bc6 29.Kf2 Nd7 30.Nc3 Nxe5 31.dxe5 Qd8 32.Ne2 Bb4 33.h3 Qa8 34.Qb6 Qb7 35.Qd8+ Bf8

36.Nd4 Bd7 37.g4 c3 38.Bd1 Qc8 39.Qxc8 Bxc8 40.Bf3 Bc5 41.Ke2 Holroyd,K (2529)-Lounek,J (2511) ICCF email 2015 ½-½ ]

**12.Bb2 5:06**



**a5?!N 4:39**

[ 12...c5 13.bxc5 bxc5 14.dxc5 Nxc5 15.Rfd1 Nxd3 16.Qxd3 Qa5 17.Qb5 Qxb5 18.Nxb5 Rfd8 19.Rab1 Bc6 20.Nbd4 Ba4 21.Rdc1 Ne4 22.Nc6 Bxc6 23.Rxc6 Rab8 24.Rcc1 Rb3 25.Bd4 Rxb1 26.Rxb1 Bxa3 27.Bxa7 Bd6 28.Nd4 Rc8 29.f3 Nf6 30.Nf5 Bf8 31.Rb8 Rxb8 32.Bxb8 g6 33.Nd4 Nd7 34.Ba7 Bb4 ½-½ (34) Rovik,F-Solstad,T Gausdal 2000 ]

**13.b5± 2:00 Bd6 2:07 14.a4 7:09 Qe7 3:00 15.Qb3! 57 Rae8 17:02 16.Ba3 1:01 Proceeding with the plan.**

**16...Bxa3?! 2:53**

[ 16...Rc8 ]

[ 16...g6 ]

**17.Qxa3 22 Qe6 1:03 18.Rac1 5:39 [ 18.Ne2 ]**

**18...Ne4 6:13 19.Ne2 2:46 Rc8 2:30 20.Nf4 1:39 Qf6? 1:50**

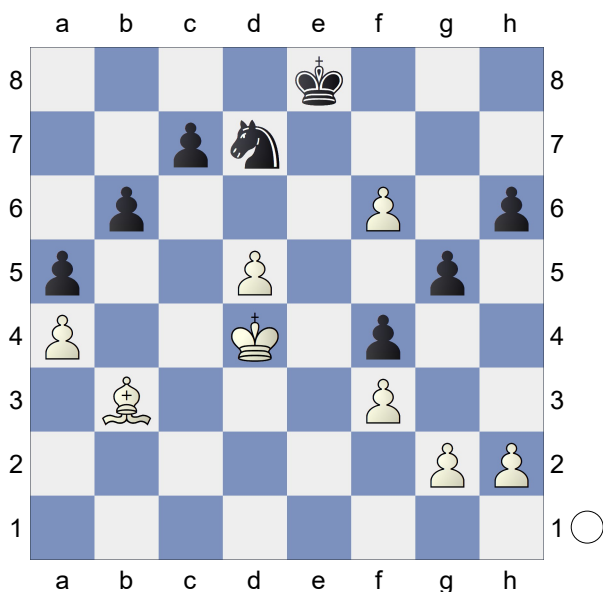
[ 20...Qd6! 21.Qb3 Ng5 ]

**21.Qb3+- 13:18**

[ 21.Rc6! Bxc6 22.bxc6 Qxc6 ]

**21...Qd6 1:14 22.Rc2 5:16 f5 6:04**

23.Rfc1 1:35 Rf7 22 24.Rc6 8:23 Bxc6  
 50 25.bxc6 1:51 Ndf6 3:13 26.Ne5 18  
 g5 6:16 27.Nxf7 9:43 Kxf7 18 28.Nxd5  
 2:55 Nxd5 6:22 29.f3 22 Nef6 1:10  
 30.e4 29 Qb4 2:32 31.Bc4 43 Qxb3 42  
 32.Bxb3 32 Ke7 2:33 33.e5 4:05 Re8  
 3:04 34.Re1 2:49 Kd8 42 35.Kf1 15  
 Nb4 4:11 36.exf6 31 Rxe1+ 14  
 37.Kxe1 4 Nxc6 12 38.d5 41 Ne5 1:24  
 39.Kd2 1:47 Ke8 1:11 40.Ke3 1:31  
 Nd7 2:16 41.Kd4 1:18 f4 2:10



42.f7+? 50

[ 42.d6! Nxf6 43.dxc7 Kd7 44.Ke5  
 Ne8 45.h4= ]

42...Ke7 36 43.Bc4? 1:03

[ 43.h3 h5 44.Bc4? ]

43...Nc5!-+ 18 44.Bb5 15

[ 44.d6+! cxd6 45.Bb5 Ne6+ 46.Ke4  
 Kf8! 47.h3 Ke7 48.Kf5 d5 ]

44...Kxf7 29

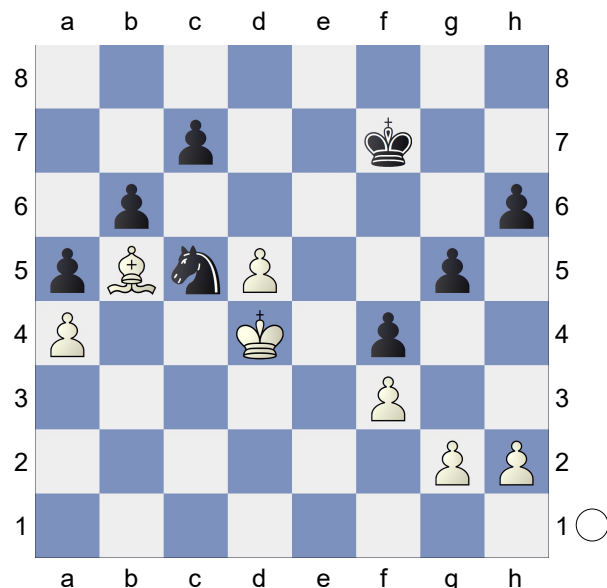
[ 44...Nb7!-+ ]

(Diagram)

45.Ke5? 17

[ 45.d6!? c6! 46.Bxc6 Ke6 47.Kc4  
 Kxd6 48.Be8 Nd7 49.Kb5 Nf6  
 50.Bc6 Kc7? ]

45...Nb7 1:37 46.Bd7 1:03 Ke7 47



47.Bc6 52 Nd6 20 48.g3 2:32 fxg3  
 1:09 49.hxg3 4 h5 24 50.Ba8 1:46 h4  
 52 51.gxh4 12 gxh4 5 52.Kf4 8 b5 33  
 53.axb5 1:21 a4 6 54.b6 14 cxb6 40  
 0-1

**B76**  
 2120  
 2207  
 2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (3.1) 18.11.25  
 [Winslow,Elliott]

Yet another critical opening that I have known about, well aware of the problems, and been sitting on learning for years even. I lose my way, and Eilon finds himself in clear first. I provide a case for an addendum to the appropriate-for-chess saying, "The knowledge in the books -- stays in the books," which is "... even if you've read them." (!) 1.e4 4 c5 1:47 2.Nf3 6 d6 1:28 3.d4 5 cxd4 5 4.Nxd4 4 Nf6 6 5.Nc3 4 g6 3:53 6.Be3 43 Bg7 42 7.f3 17 0-0 8 8.Qd2 20 Nc6 6 9.0-0-0 14 d5 22 10.Kb1!? 13  
 A slippery move.

[ 10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Nxc6 bxc6  
 12.Bd4 ( 12.Nxd5 cxd5 13.Qxd5  
 Qc7 is playable, but Black has a lot

more fun. ) and it's back to 12...e5!? to keep the game interesting. 13.Bc5 Be6 14.Ne4 Re8 ]

[I've played 10.Qe1!? myself, with lines similar to 10.exd5; e5 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.exd5 Nxd5 ]

**10...Rb8!?** 4:20 Perhaps I should better say: I've studied the line and just didn't remember anything. I've been through Anish Giri's coverage of this 10.Kb1!? in his Chessable book, but it was as if it hadn't happened when confronted with it.

[ 10...Nxd4 11.e5!! Nf5! 12.exf6 exf6!? ( 12...Bxf6!? 13.Nxd5 Qxd5!! 14.Qxd5 Nxe3 15.Qd3 Nxd1 16.Qxd1 ) ]

**11.Nb3!?** 43

[ 11.Nxc6 bxc6 ]

[ 11.h4!? h5 ]

[ 11.Be2!? e5 12.Nxc6 bxc6 13.exd5 ]

[ 11.Ndb5!? was the move I did remember, as being a problem. So why am I here?! Dunno. a6 12.Na7 e6 13.Qf2 Bd7 14.exd5 Nxd5 15.Nxd5 exd5 16.Rxd5 Qf6 17.c3 Be6 18.Nxc6 bxc6 19.Rc5 Rfe8 20.Bd3 Qe7 21.Bd4 Bxd4 22.cxd4 Rb4 23.Rhc1 Reb8 24.R1c2 Bd5 25.Bc4 Qe6 26.Bxd5 cxd5 27.b3 Qf5 28.Kb2 Kg7 29.Qe3 Qf6 30.Rxd5 Qb6 31.Rd7 Kg8 32.Qe7 Rf8 33.Rc8 1-0 (33) Ivanchuk,V (2726)-Mamedov,R (2709) Huaian 2017 ]

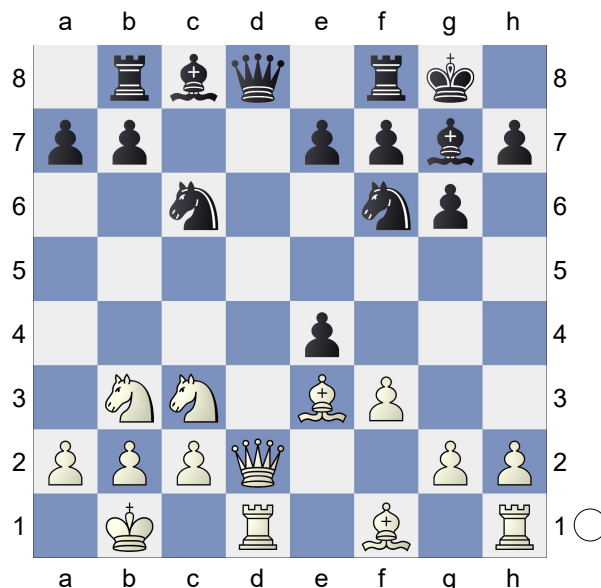
**11...dxe4** 9:54

(Diagram)

It's some bad psychology on my part -- my opponent plays one of these insipid lines, and I think they \*must\* have a good reason. **12.Qxd8** 55

[ 12.Qc1 Qe8 13.Nb5 Bd7! ]

**12...Rxd8** 3 **13.Rxd8+** 36 **Nxd8** 2



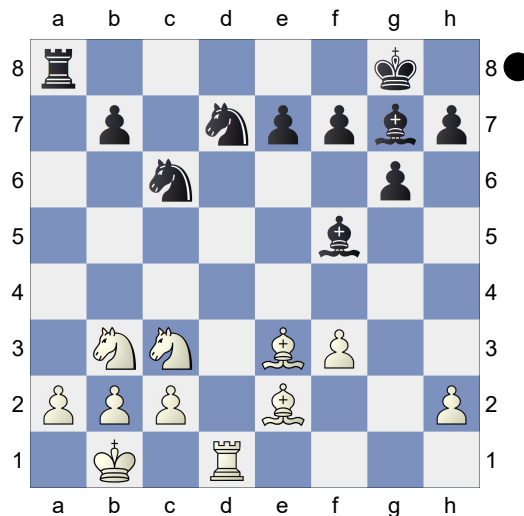
**14.Bxa7** 11 **Ra8** 33 **15.Bb6** 16 **Bf5**

1:42 I was relieved to notice I wasn't down a pawn. (!) **16.fxe4** 46

[ Insipid is unfair; note this game where Shabalov outplays Kudrin in a US championship 28 years ago:

16.Be2 Nc6 17.Rd1 ( 17.Nc5!= )

17...exf3 18.gxf3?! Nd7 19.Be3??



**A) 19...Bxc3!** 20.Bd3 ( 20.bxc3 Bxc2+! 21.Kxc2 Rxa2+ 22.Kc1 Rxe2 23.Rxd7 Rxe3 -- so that's why the bishop can't be on e3 )

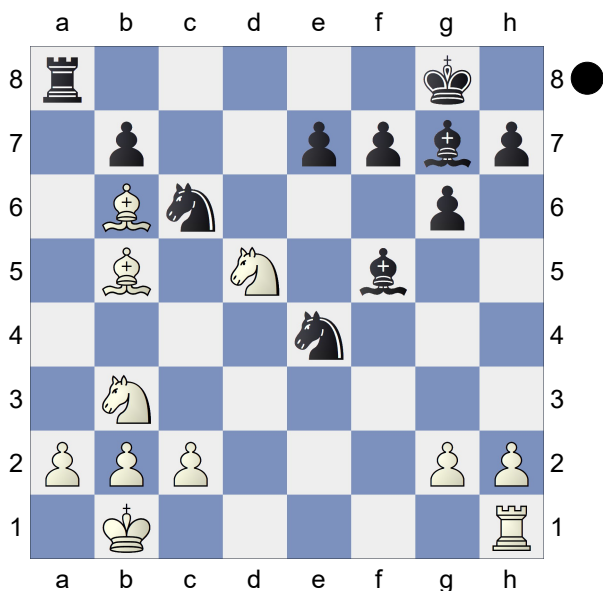
20...Nde5! 21.Bxf5 gxf5 22.bxc3 Nxf3 23.Rf1 Nxe2 24.Rxf5 f6! (covering g5 and e5) and with ... Ne5, Black escapes.;

**B) 19...Rc8?** 20.Ne4 Be5 21.Ng3



Be6 22.f4 Bb8 23.Bd3 f5 24.Ne2  
Nb4 25.Bb5 Nf6 26.c4 Na6?!  
27.Na5 Nc7 28.Ba4 Nce8 29.c5±  
Bd5 30.Nc3 Bf3 31.Bb3+ Kf8  
32.Be6 Bxd1 33.Bxc8 Bf3 34.h3  
Nh5 35.Bxb7 Bxb7 36.Nxb7 Nxf4  
37.Bxf4 Bxf4 38.b4 g5 39.Nd5  
Be5 40.Ne3 e6 41.b5 Bf4 42.Ng2  
Bg3 43.b6 Nf6 44.a4 Nd7 45.Kc2  
h5 46.Kd2 h4 47.a5 Nb8 48.Ne3  
Ke7 49.c6 Na6 50.Ke2 Bf4  
51.Kf3 Bg3 52.Nc2 e5 53.Ne3  
e4+ 54.Ke2 Ke6 55.Nc2 Be5  
56.Ne3 Bf4 57.Nc2 Be5 58.Ke3  
Bf4+ 59.Kd4 Be5+ 60.Kc4 g4  
61.Kb5 g3 62.Kxa6 g2 63.Nd8+  
Ke7 1-0 (63) Shabalov,A (2585)-  
Kudrin,S (2535) US chmp G2 (4),  
Chandler 22 Aug 1997 CBM 061  
[Schulz,Andre]

**16...Nxe4 36 17.Nd5 20 Nc6 1:27**  
**18.Bb5 23**



**e6!N 5:53**

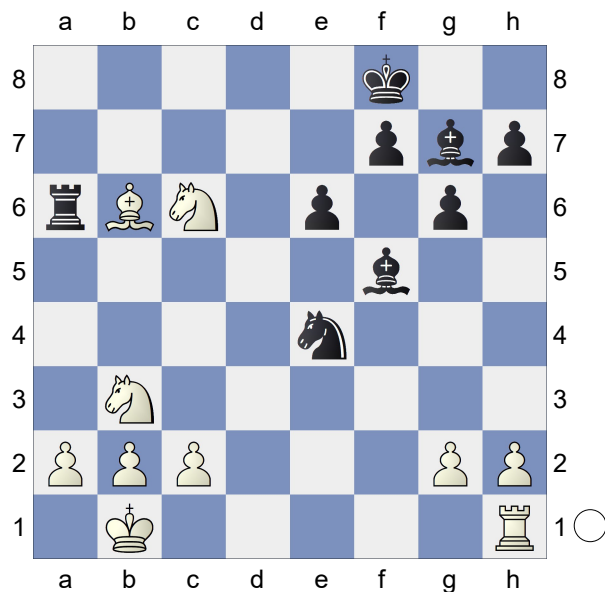
[Some game went 18...e5? 19.Re1±  
( 19.a4± ) 19...Nd6 20.Bxc6 bxc6  
21.Ne7+ Kh8 22.Bc5 Ne4 23.Bb4  
Nf6 24.Nxf5 gxf5 25.Bc3 Ne4  
26.Bb4 Nf6 ½-½ (26) Longson,S  
(2080)-Franklin,S (2185) Hastings  
2011 ]

**19.Bxc6 1:03**

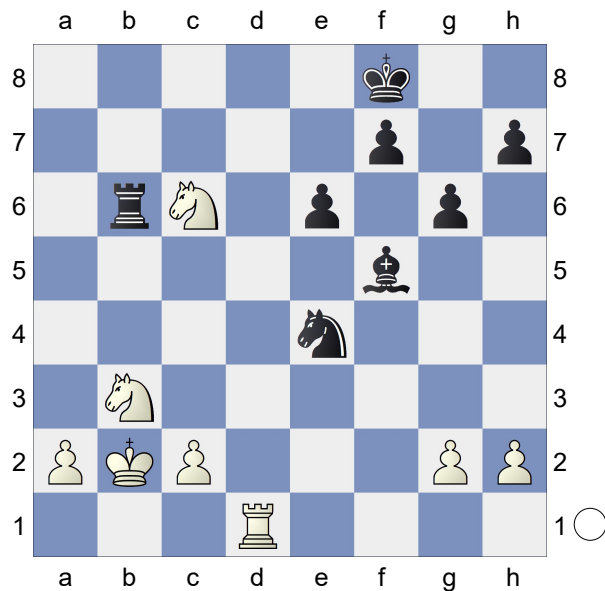
[ 19.Ne3!? Nb4 ]

**19...bxc6 30 20.Ne7+ 7 Kf8 29**

**21.Nxc6 13 Ra6 5:53**



**22.Rd1! 15 Bxb2! 3:17 23.Kxb2 16**  
**Rxb6= 30**

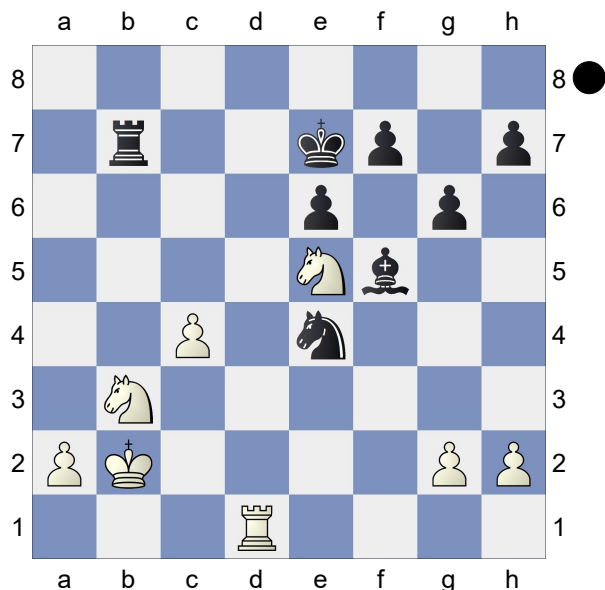


It's equal, but I was constantly and  
unnecessarily) concerned with his two  
passed pawns... **24.Ne5 18 Rb5! 1:50**  
[ 24...Kg7!? 25.g4 Rb5 26.gxf5 Rxe5  
27.fxe6 Rxe6= ]  
**25.Nd7+ 9:42**  
[ 25.Rd8+ Ke7 26.Nc6+ ( 26.Rd7+?  
Ke8 27.Rxf7 Rxe5-+ ) 26...Kf6 27.a4  
Rb6 28.Nb8 Rd6= ]

**25...Ke7 6:32 26.c4?! 1:54**

[ 26.a4 Rb4 ( 26...Rb7= ) 27.a5 Nf2  
28.Rd2 Ne4= ]

**26...Rb7 54 27.Ne5 49**



**Kf6 3:53**

[ 27...h5! 28.Nc6+ Kf6 29.Ncd4 e5  
(-0.18/24) ( 29...Ra7 30.c5 Rxa2+  
31.Kxa2 Nc3+ 32.Ka3 Nxd1 33.c6  
Ke7 34.Kb4 Kd6 35.Na5 Bd3= ) ]

**28.Rd7 9:01 Rb8! 26:03 (else 0.00)**

**29.Nxf7! 36:33 e5 27 30.Rc7!= 5:58**

[ 30.Rd8? Rb4 27 ]

[ 30.Ra7 h5!-+ 31.h4 Rf8 32.Nh6  
Be6-+ ]

**30...Be6 4:23**

[ 30...Rf8 31.Nh6 Be6 ]

[ 30...h5 31.c5 (all 0.00/d43)(Why 30.  
Rc7 is better) ]

**31.Nh6 32 Nd2 1:50 (?)**

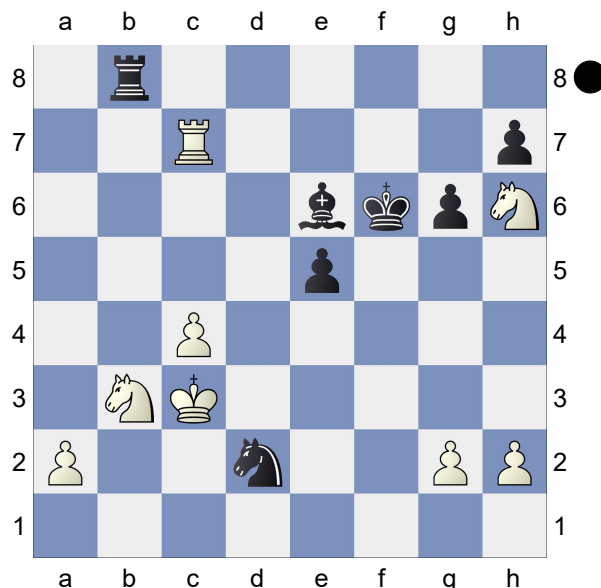
[ 31...Kg5 32.Nf7+ Kf6= ]

[ 31...Rf8!? 32.h3 Kg5 33.Ng4 h5  
34.Nxe5 Rf2+ 35.Ka3 Rxc2 36.h4+  
Kxh4 37.Nd4 Bg4= ( 37...Bh3= ) ]

**32.Kc3 1:15**

[ 32.Rc6!? Nxc4+ 33.Kc3 Ne3  
34.Nc5 Nd5+ 35.Kd2 Kg7!=  
(+0.05/36) ]

(Diagram)



**32...Nf1?? 3:10 I lose my sense of reality.**

[ 32...Nxb3 33.axb3 e4! 34.Kd4  
Rxb3 35.Kxe4 Rb2= (0.00) ]

[ 32...Nxc4

**A) 33.Rxc4 Bxc4 34.Kxc4 Ra8  
35.Ng4+ Kg5! ( 35...Kf5 36.Ne3+  
Ke4 37.Nd5 Ra4+ 38.Kc5 Ra8= );**

**B) 33.Rc6!? Ne3 34.Nc5 Nd5+  
35.Kd2 Kg7= 36.Rxe6 Kxh6= ]**

**33.Nc5 1:10 Bf5 9:05 34.Nxf5 1:57**

**gxf5 7 35.Nd7+ 11 Eilon is now in clear first, and appears to be staying there until the end of the tournament.**

**1-0**

**B52**

□ **Tsodikova,Natalya**

**2246**

■ **Lavi,Eilon**

**2120**

2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (4.1) 25.11.25  
[Winslow,Elliott]

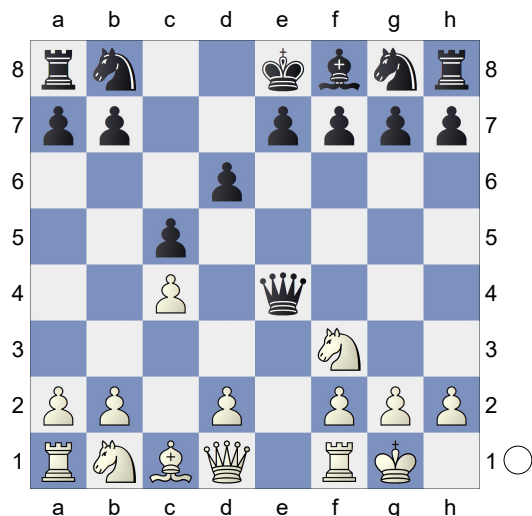
This was another key game for Lavi's taking over the tournament. In this quiet and not particularly popular line, the center blocks up and it happens mostly on the flanks. Both sides miss big chances, but it is Lavi coming through in a delicate ending at the end. **1.e4 35:49**

**c5 51 2.Nf3 16 d6 6 3.Bb5+ 6 Bd7 6  
4.Bxd7+ 13 Qxd7 5 5.c4 13 Nf6 1:13**

[I still remember how surprised I was  
to see Browne-Quinteros, 1974,  
involving 5...Qg4 6.0-0!

**A) 6...Nf6 7.Nc3 Nc6 ( 7...Nxe4??  
8.Qb3!/- ) 8.h3!± no transposition!;**

**B) 6...Qxe4**



(Quinteros must have a hard head  
to play this -- twice! -- in one  
month:.) 7.d4!

**B1) 7...Nf6 8.Nc3 Qf5 9.Qb3**  
( 9.Re1!; 9.Nb5! ) 9...b6 10.dxc5  
Qxc5 11.Be3 Qc8 12.Rfe1 e5  
13.Bg5 Nfd7 14.Rad1 f6  
15.Bh4 Nc5 16.Qc2 Nc6  
17.Nd5 Kf7 18.b4 Ne6 19.Qe4  
g5 20.Qf5 Bg7 21.Nxf6 Bxf6  
22.Rxd6 Ke7 23.Nxg5 Bxg5  
24.Rxc6 Qxc6 25.Bxg5+ Kd7  
26.Rd1+ Kc8 27.b5 Qe8  
28.Rd6 Rf8 29.Rxe6 Rxf5  
30.Rxe8+ Kb7 31.Re7+ Kb8  
32.Re8+ Kb7 33.Re7+ Kb8  
34.Be3 h5 35.h3 h4 36.Rh7 a6  
37.Rxh4 axb5 38.Rh8+ Kb7  
39.Rxa8 Kxa8 40.cxb5 e4  
41.a4 Kb7 42.g4 Rd5 43.h4  
1-0 (43) Ostojic,P-Quinteros,M  
Malaga Jan 18, 1974;

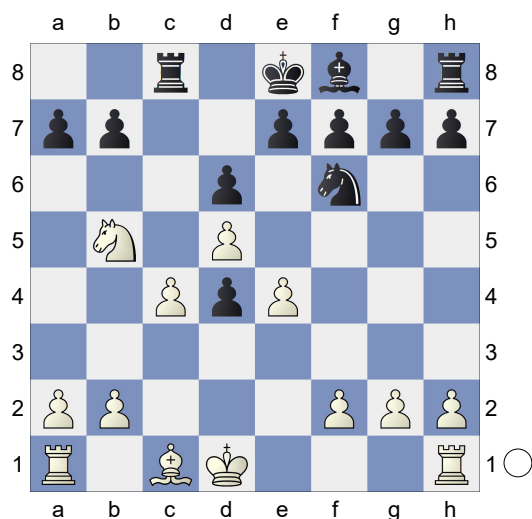
**B2) 7...cxd4 8.Re1 Qc6 9.Nxd4**  
Qxc4 10.Na3 Qc8 11.Bf4 Qd7

12.Nab5 e5 13.Bxe5 dxe5  
14.Rxe5+ Be7 15.Rd5 Qc8  
16.Nf5 Kf8 17.Nxe7 Kxe7  
18.Re5+ 1-0 (18) Browne,W-  
Quinteros,M Wijk aan Zee Jan  
31 1974 ]

[ 5...e5 ]

**6.Nc3 16 e5 40** And this line also gave  
me pause -- "obviously" Black is worse,  
with the conspicuously worse bishop.  
And Kavalek, a chess hero, was playing  
it! Actually he did it a move earlier, when  
he could still play ...Nge7 with, maybe, a  
quicker f-pawn mobilization!? In any  
case, it's all happening on the wings  
now.

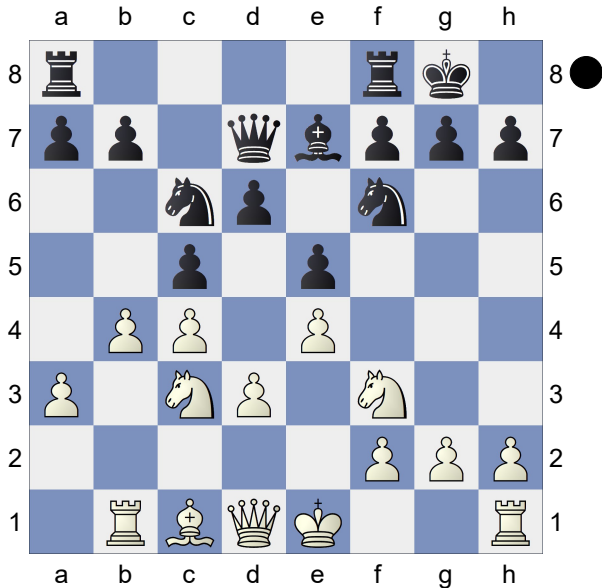
[Chessbase's "Novelty Annotation"  
offers a very recent 2600+ game,  
without mentioning that it's a blitz  
game: 6...Nc6 7.d4 Qg4 (compare to  
5...Qg4 above) 8.d5! Nd4 9.Nxd4  
Qxd1+ 10.Kxd1 cxd4 11.Nb5 Rc8



12.b3 ( 12.Ke2!? Nxe4 13.f3 Nf6  
14.b3±/= ) 12...Nxe4 13.Ke2 Nc3+  
14.Nxc3 dxc3 15.Be3 a6 16.Rac1  
e5 17.Rxc3 f5 18.b4 Be7 19.f3 Kf7  
20.c5 a5 21.a3 axb4 22.axb4 f4  
23.Bf2 Ra8 24.Rhc1 Ra4 25.Rc4  
Rc8 26.Kd3 Ra3+ 27.R1c3 Ra2  
28.Rc2 Ra3+ 29.Ke4 g6 30.g3 fxg3  
31.Bxg3 Ra4 32.b5 Rxc5 33.Rxa4  
Rxc2 34.Ra7 Rc4+ 35.Kd3 Rd4+

36.Kc3 0-1 (63), Vokhidov,S (2640)-  
Hakobyan,A (2613) Yerevan Asrian  
Memorial Blitz Nov 29, 2025 ]

7.d3 2:00 Be7 1:48 8.a3 1:42 Nc6 14  
White is slightly better. 9.Rb1 1:18 0-0  
1:10 10.b4 1:24



**Bd8N 2:25**

[Another blitz game: 10...b6 11.0-0  
Nd4 12.Nxd4 cxd4 13.Na2 Ne8  
14.b5 Nc7 15.Nb4 f5 16.exf5 Qxf5  
1-0 (43) Buchenau,F (2190)-  
Yevchenko,A (2276) Titled Tuesday  
intern op 03rd Dec Early  
2024 ]

[ 10...h6 (another pawn on dark  
squares!) has a plus score over the  
ten times this position has been  
reached... 11.0-0 b6 anyway ]

**11.Nd5 1:34**

[ 11.0-0± ]

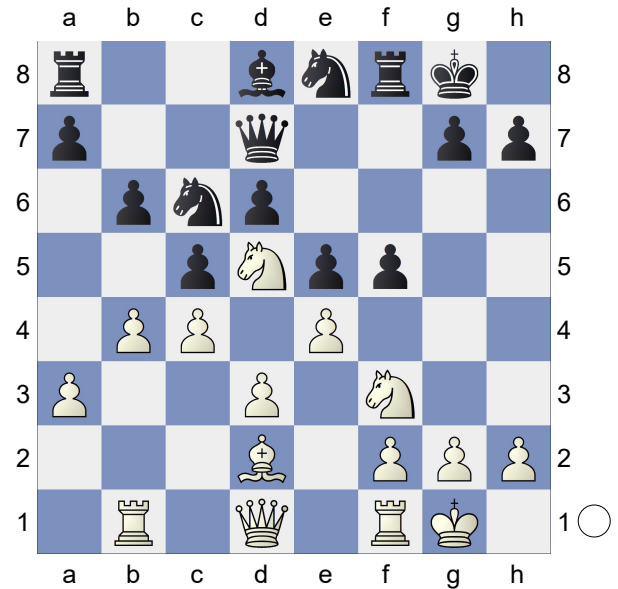
**11...Ne8 6:26**

[ 11...cxb4= 12.axb4 Nxd5 13.cxd5  
Ne7 ]

**12.0-0 6:38 b6 3:46 13.Bd2 2:00 f5  
1:49**

(Diagram)

**14.bxc5 4:45 bxc5 50 15.Rb3 3:29**  
[ 15.exf5± Kh8 16.Ne3 ]



**15...Ba5 1:45** The position is symmetric  
and equal

[ 15...fxe4= keeps the balance.

16.dxe4 Nf6 ]

**16.Bxa5 4:59**

[ 16.exf5± Bd8 17.g4 ]

**16...Nxa5± 9 17.Rb5 3:02 Nc6 1:52**

**18.Qb3 3:12** White plays on the queen  
side and is better

[ 18.Qe2± ]

**18...fxe4= 2:57 19.dxe4 37 Qg4 6:09**

[ 19...Nc7= ]

**20.Qd3± 46 Rd8 12:09 21.h3 2:01 Qh5  
7:44**

[ 21...Qe6± is more appropriate. ]

**22.Rb7± 44 Rf7 2:27 Repels Ne7+**

**23.Rfb1 2:11 Nb4 3:40 24.R7xb4 50**

[ 24.axb4 Rxb7 25.bxc5 ( 25.b5  
Kh8± ) 25...Rxb1+ 26.Qxb1 dxc5= ]

**24...cxb4 33 25.axb4 1:30 Nc7 32**

**26.Ra1 3:59**

[ White should try 26.c5± ]

**26...Ne6= 1:20 27.Ra6 3:53 Rdf8 2:35**

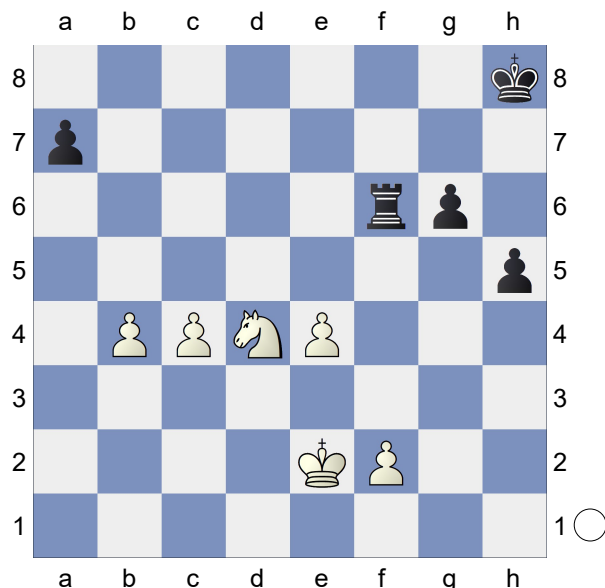
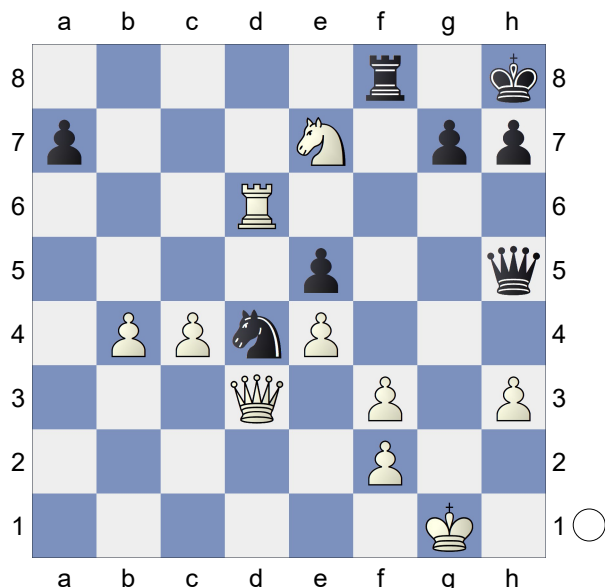
**28.Rxd6 2:58 Rxf3 1:08 29.gxf3 1:00**

**Nd4 5:56 30.Ne7+ 52 Kh8± 45**

(Diagram)

Black is not keeping still **31.Nf5! 4:00**  
**Nxf3+ 5:46**

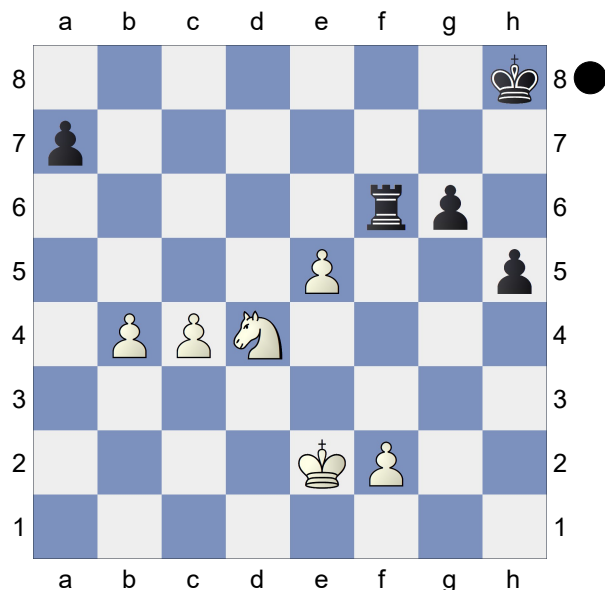




[ 31...Qxh3 32.Nxd4 exd4  
33.Rxd4+- ]  
**32.Kf1 3 g6 5:54**  
[ 32...Qxh3+?! 33.Ke2 Ng1+  
34.Kd2± ]  
**33.Rd8 42 Qxh3+? 2:55**  
[ 33...Nh2+= 34.Ke1 Nf3+ 35.Kf1  
Nh2+ ]  
**34.Ke2+- 2 Nd4+ 2:38 35.Rxd4 3:47**  
[ 35.Nxd4? Qxd3+ 36.Kxd3 Rxd8-+ ]  
[ ♠35.Qxd4 Qg4+ 36.Kf1 gxf5  
37.Rxf8+ Kg7 38.Qd6 ( 38.Qxe5+  
Kxf8 39.Qxf5+ Qxf5+- ) ]  
**35...Qh5+ 1:39 36.Kd2? 1:04**  
[ 36.Ke1+- Qg5 ( 36...Qh1+  
37.Kd2± ) 37.Rd7 gxf5 38.exf5  
( 38.Rxa7 fxe4 39.Qg3 Qc1+ 40.Ke2  
Qxc4+ 41.Ke1 Qxb4+ 42.Ke2 Qb5+  
43.Ke1 Rg8= ) ]  
**36...Qg5+= 32**  
[ 36...exd4 37.Qxd4+ ]  
**37.Ke2 57 exd4 2:20 38.Qxd4+ 17 Qf6**  
**6 39.Qxf6+ 17 Rxf6 6 Endgame KR-**  
**KN 40.Nd4 2:37 h5**

(Diagram)

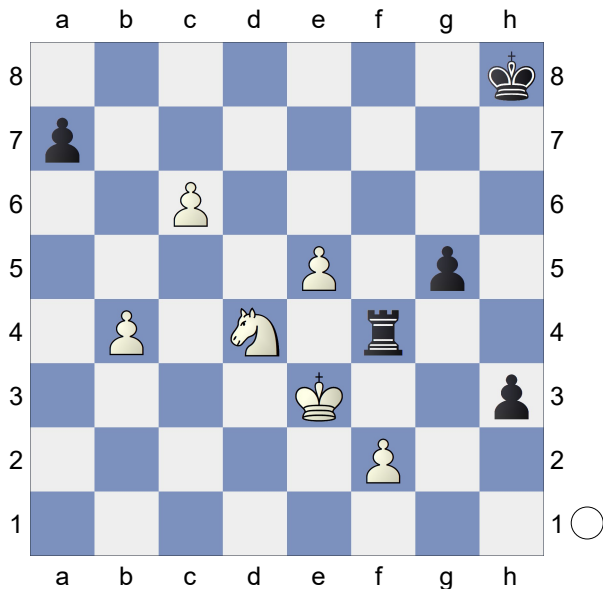
**41.e5? 32**  
[ ♠41.c5! ]



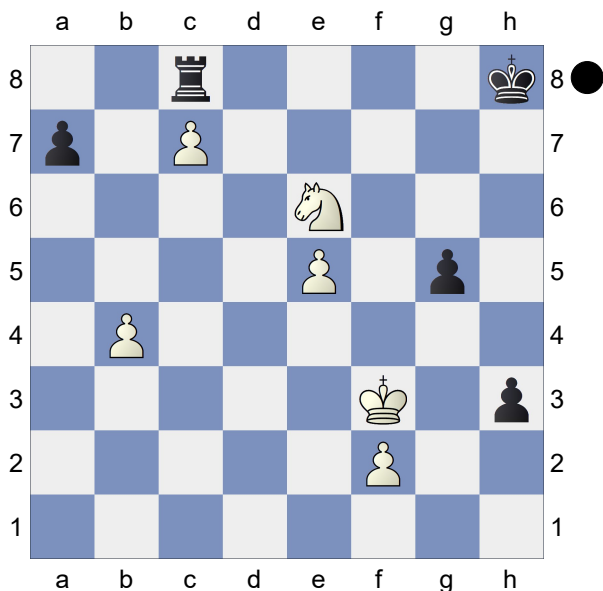
**41...Rf4? 2:18**  
[ 41...Rf8!-+ 42.c5 h4 ]  
**42.Ke3 34 g5 54 43.c5! 30 h4 2:31**  
**44.c6 23 h3 2:11**

(Diagram)

**45.c7? 17**  
[ 45.e6! Rf8! ( 45...h2!? 46.e7□  
Re4+ 47.Kxe4 h1Q+ 48.Kf5  
White draws pretty easily ) 46.e7! Re8  
47.Kf3! Rxe7 48.Nb5 ( 48.Kg3  
Nb5! is \*really\* in the air now Re4± )  
48...Re8 49.Nxa7 Re7 ( -> ...Rh7! )  
50.Nb5□ Re4! 51.Kg3! Rxb4 52.c7



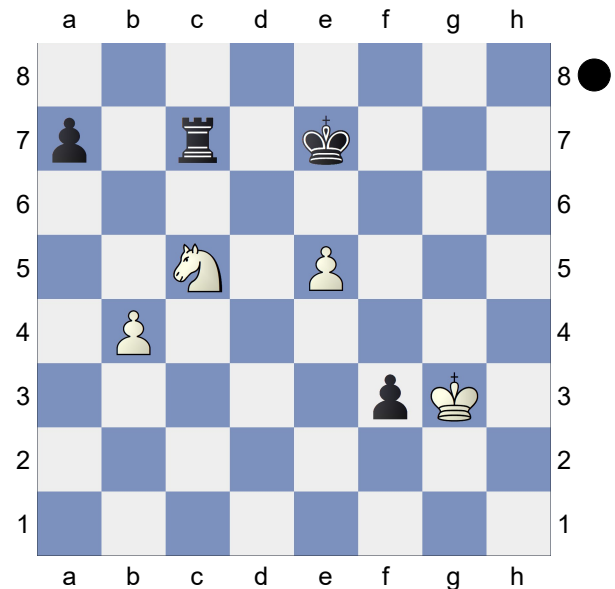
Rc4 53.Kxh3= ]  
**45...Rf8+ 29 46.Ne6 26 Rc8 1:22**  
 ...h2 would now be deadly. **47.Kf3 1:02**



**g4+! 12 48.Kg3 23 Kg8 8 49.f3 1:01**  
**gxf3 39 50.Kxh3 3 Kf7 31 51.Nd8+**  
**1:21 Ke8 10**  
 [ Δ51...Ke7 but it's totally won. ]  
**52.Ne6 47 Ke7 1:56**  
 [ Δ52...Kd7 The computer quibbles. ]  
**53.Nc5 1:06 Rxc7 35 54.Kg3 3**

(Diagram)

**a5! 1:16 This ends it. 55.Na6 28 Ra7**  
**1:39 56.b5 4 a4 19 Black mates.**



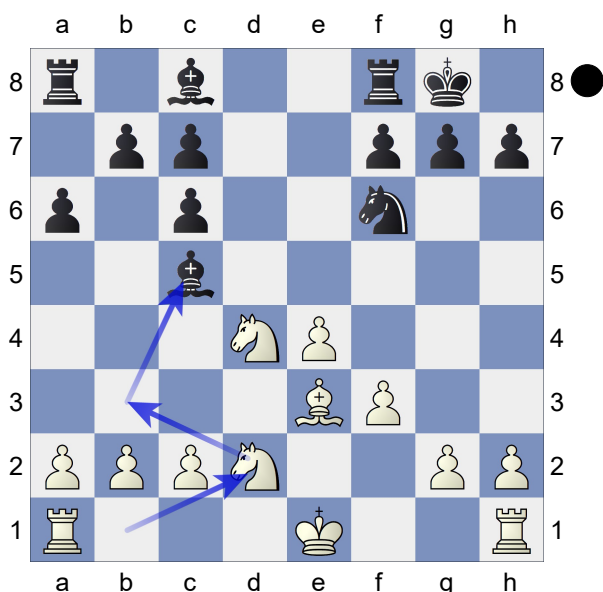
**57.Nc5 49 Ra5 46 58.Kxf3 1:38 a3 11**  
 A wild game in all phases (well, except the opening!). Weighted Error Value:  
 White=0.79/Black=0.63  
**0-1**

**C68**  
**2120**  
**2050**  
 2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (5.1) 02.12.25  
*[Winslow, Elliott]*

Eilon flew out of the starting gate with four wins, and now this game. Note that on the one hand he is now a full point ahead of the field, but he took two half-point byes in the last two rounds, so there are four people (with 3½) who could catch up: Tsodikova, Bhatia, Mallela and Chen. **1.e4 1:36 e5 7 2.Nf3**  
**5 Nc6 4 3.Bb5 5 a6 9 4.Bxc6 6 dxc6**  
**5 5.d4 6** Popular over a hundred years ago. Including by Emanuel Lasker. White plays for a clearcut imbalance: healthier pawns vs. the two bishops, in what really should be called a queenless middlegame. Such play is less seen than the murkier 4.Ba4, keeping every option on the table.

[ 5.0-0 is the "modern" move (although it was played over a dozen times before the turn of the century -- that's 19th to 20th!), when curiously the the "natural" 6...Nf6 is one of the \*worst\* moves (well, 6...Qd3 is worse) when White can get away with taking the e5-pawn. One reason one might prefer 6. d4 is 5...Bg4 6.h3 h5!? I'm not going to get into this too much here, but I will note that White's best attempts to any advantage start with 7.d3! ]  
 [I've always wondered about 5.Nc3!? f6 The computer's top move, but it so happens that Black has scored really well with almost anything else again! 6.d4 exd4 7.Nxd4 c5 8.Nde2 Qxd1+ 9.Nxd1 Castle queenside!? Stockfish doesn't support it -- and it's \*Black\* who 0-0-0's, after Be6 with slightly the better of it. ]

**5...exd4 37 6.Qxd4 6 Qxd4 19 7.Nxd4 5** It's 2025, and the computers are making \*Black\* with some plus. **7...Nf6?! 15** (Again! In fact it's a vulnerable square, subject to possibilities of e5 a/o Bg5)  
**8.f3 6 Bc5 1:37 C68: Ruy Lopez: Exchange Variation, sidelines. 9.Be3 51 0-0 1:07 10.Nd2± 23**



**b5?± 10:37 Too loose.**

[ A better approach would be to stay compact, say 10...Nd7± ]

**11.Kf2N 2:25** The better move defence of the bishop.

[ The "Predecessor" is a game between players rated 1047 and 1376, so maybe I should delete? 11.Nf1 Bb7 12.0-0-0 a5 13.Nb3 Be7 ( 13...Bd6 ) 14.Bc5+- 0-1 (60) Aggelopoulou,A (1047)-Anthopoulou,I (1376) Porto Rio 2016 ]

**11...Bb7 3:46**

[ 11...Bd7 eyes f5 and has more future. ]

**12.Nf5?! 6:09** Not the best.

[ 12.Rhd1 ]

[ 12.N2b3 ]

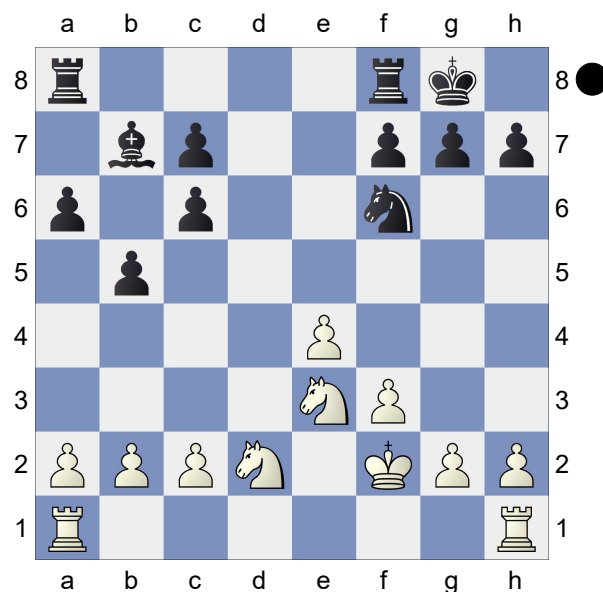
[ 12.a4!? ]

**12...Bxe3+?! 1:56**

[ ♞12...Bb6 ]

**13.Nxe3+- 53**

[ 13.Kxe3? g6 14.Ng3 Rad8± ]



Black's two bishops have been halved, and it's down to the clean helathy majority vs. doubled pawns on the other side. Borderline won game. **13...c5 2:04 14.Nb3 4:10 c4 43 15.Nc5 23**

[ White could target the queenside with the curious 15.Na5 and 16.b3 cxb3

17.axb3 \*or\* 17.cxb3, opening a file one way or another (but improving Black's pawns). ]

**15...Bc6 1:05 16.Nf5 1:49** "A dynamic duo of knights" says ChessBase's AI,

[ But hopping on the d-file with 16.Rhd1 is somewhat better, says Stockfish. ]

**16...Rfe8 1:35** That same AI give "Prevents Ne7+" if you'd like to ignore it.

**17.Nd4?! 1:21**

[ 17.b4!+- has better winning chances. cxb3 18.axb3 ]

**17...Nd7!± 2:40 18.Nxd7 1:02 Bxd7 5**

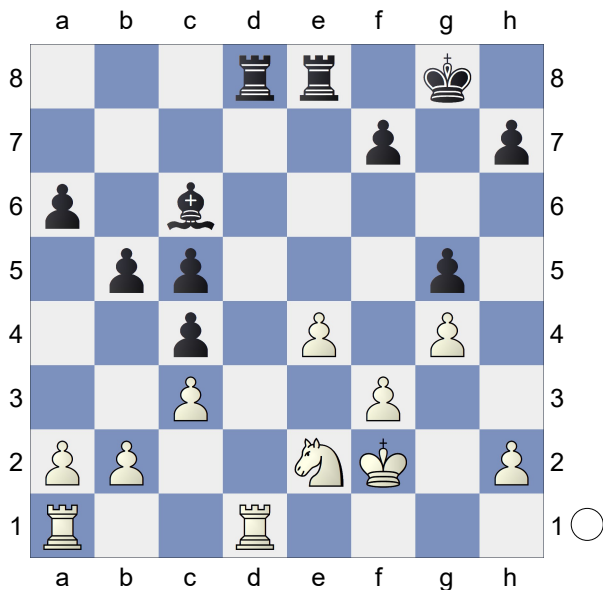
**19.Rhd1 13 Rad8 30 20.c3 2:45 c5**

**1:51 21.Ne2 2:34 Bc6 54**

[ 21...Be6± ]

**22.g4 7:27 g5 3:18**

[ Δ22...Kf8 ]



**23.Ke3 3:18**

[ Δ23.h4! gxh4 24.Rac1 ]

**23...Kg7? 25:16**

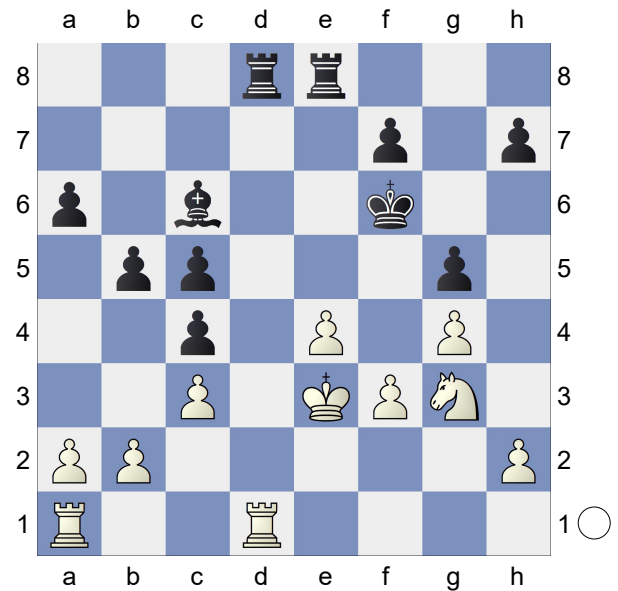
[ 23...b4± ]

**24.Ng3+- 1:50 Kf6 1:06**

(Diagram)

**25.h4! 18:36 gxh4 7:41 26.Nf5 47**

There is a threat: 27.g5+ Kxg5 28.Nd6



wins the exchange. **26...h3 11:21**

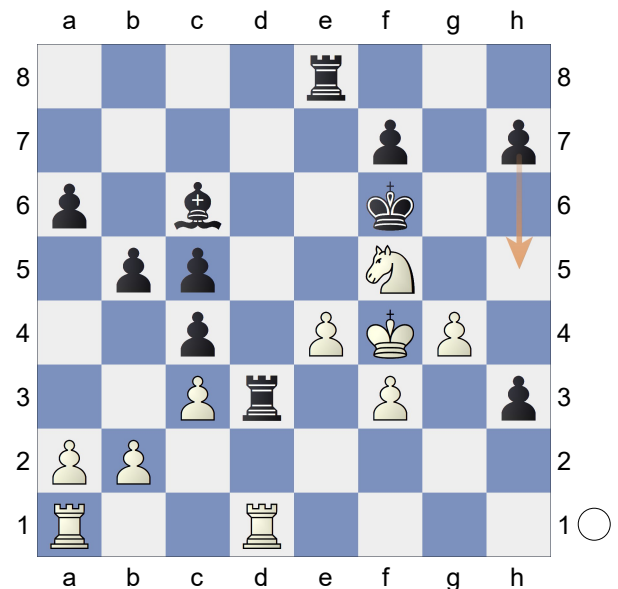
Missing it!

[ 26...Rd3+ keeps fighting. 27.Rxd3 cxd3 ]

**27.Kf4?! 1:29** Missing it back!

[ 27.g5+- ]

**27...Rd3 2:15**



**28.Rxd3?!± 9:09**

[ 28.Re1!+- ]

**28...cxd3± 7** Endgame KRB-KRN. Black is a pawn up. The position is equal.

**29.Rh1 9 Bd7! 8:00**

[ 29...d2? 30.Rxh3 Rg8 ( 30...d1R?? 31.Rh6#; 30...Rxe4+? 31.fxe4 Ke6 32.Rd3+- ) 31.Rh6+ ( 31.Rxh7? ]



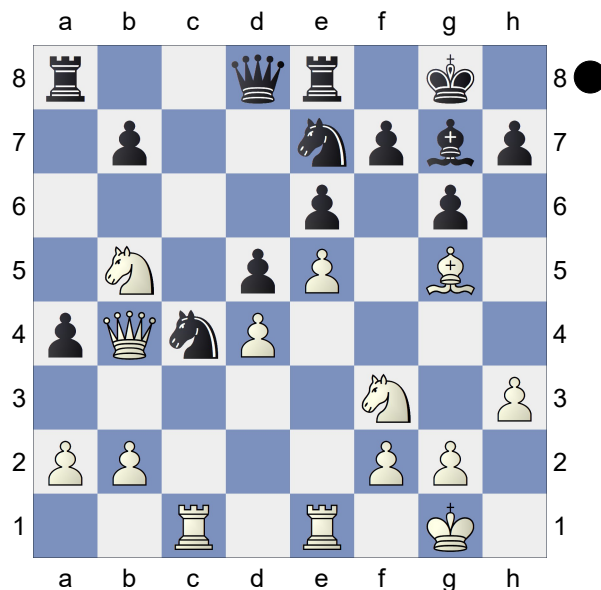
d1Q-+ ) 31...Rg6 32.Rh1!+- ]  
**30.Ne3?! 52**  
 [ 30.Nd6 Rd8! 31.Nb7 Rc8 32.Rxh3 Kg7= ]  
**30...h5 2:14**  
 [ 30...Be6= ]  
**31.Rxh3 11:14 hxc4 28 32.Rh6+ 1:43 Kg7 27 33.Rd6 51**  
 [ 33.Rxa6 Re6 ( 33...gxf3 34.Rd6= ) 34.Rxe6 Bxe6 35.fxc4 ( 35.Nxc4? Bxc4 36.Ke3 d2-+ ) 35...Bxa2 36.Nf5+ Kg6 37.Nh4+ Kf6 38.g5+ Kg7 ]  
**33...Bc8 2:38 34.fxc4 7:22 c4 1:16 35.b3 5:49 Be6 6:01 36.bxc4 3:49**  
 [ 36.Rxa6? b4 37.bxc4 ( 37.cxb4? c3-+ ) 37...bxc3-+ ]  
**36...Bxc4 1:50 37.Nxc4 1:05 bxc4= 6 KR-KR 38.Ke3 17 Re6 1:40 39.Rd8 49 Rh6 38 40.Kd4 1:51 Rh8 1:22 41.Rd6 43**  
 [ 41.Rxh8? Kxh8 42.Ke3 Kg7-+ ]  
**41...Rh6 7 42.Rd8 28 Rh8 1:10 43.Rd6 13**  
 [ 43.Rxh8? Kxh8 44.Ke3 Kg7-+ ]  
**43...Rc8 11 44.Ke3 33 a5 9 45.Rd5 40 a4 44 46.Ra5 40 Rh8 29 47.Rxa4 1:27 Rh3+ 5**  
 [ 47...Rd8!? 48.Kd2□ Rc8= ]  
**48.Kd2 48 Rh2+ 4 49.Kd1 6 Rh1+ 11 50.Kd2 6 Rh2+ 23 51.Kd1 5 Rh1+ 1:21 52.Kd2 5 Rh2+ 14 53.Kd1 5**  
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.15 (very precise) /Black=0.15 (very precise)  
 1/2-1/2

□ Boyer,John  
 ■ Wickliffe,Zachary  
 2025 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (1.20)  
 [Winslow,Elliott]

**B31**  
**1671**  
**1480**

This game could have been in the last Newsletter, when just Round 1 had

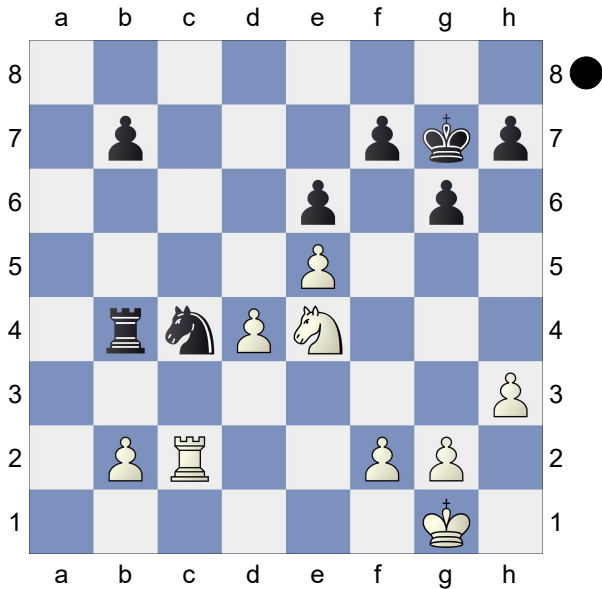
been played -- but now that we know how it's going after Round 5, it's an easy add. John Boyer starts his ascent to 1st-2nd (and there are two more rounds!) with a difficult battle against Zack Wickliffe. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 g6 4.c3 Bg7 5.0-0 Nf6 6.Re1 0-0 7.h3 d5 8.e5 Nd7 9.d4 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nb6 11.Nc3 Bd7 12.Bf4 a5 13.Qd2 Re8 14.Rac1 a4 15.Ng5 e6 16.Nf3 Ne7 17.Bg5 Bxb5 18.Nxb5 Nc4 19.Qb4



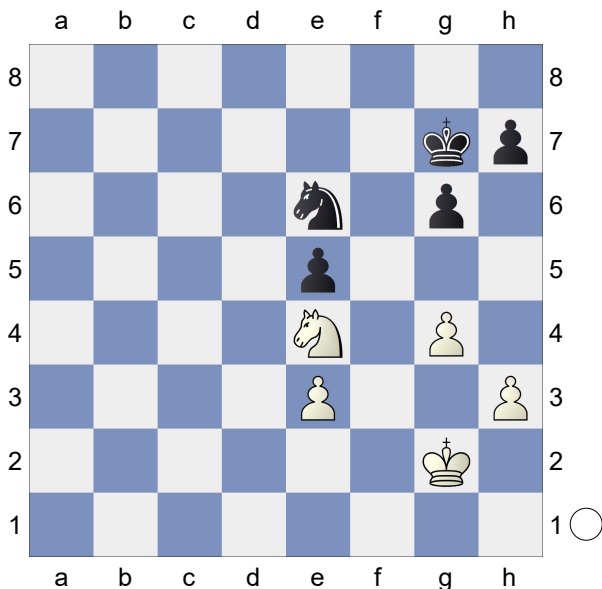
**Nc6?**

[Better to resolve the pin first with 19...h6± when White's only path to an advantage is the counterstrike 20.b3! axb3 21.axb3 Na5 22.Bd2 Nac6 23.Qc3± with some advantages. ]  
**20.Qxc4± dxc4 21.Bxd8 Rxd8 22.Rxc4 Bf8 23.Rd1**  
 [ 23.a3! ]  
**23...Ra5 24.Nc3 Bb4**  
 [ 24...a3!? ]  
**25.Nxa4?**  
 [ 25.Rb1 ]  
 [ 25.Ne4 ]  
**25...Rxa4 26.a3 Ra5 27.axb4 Rb5 28.Rdc1 Nxb4 29.Rc5 Rb6 30.Rc8 Rxc8 31.Rxc8+ Kg7 32.Ng5 Nd5 33.Rc2 Rb4 34.Rd2 Nb6 35.Ne4 Nc4**

### 36.Rc2

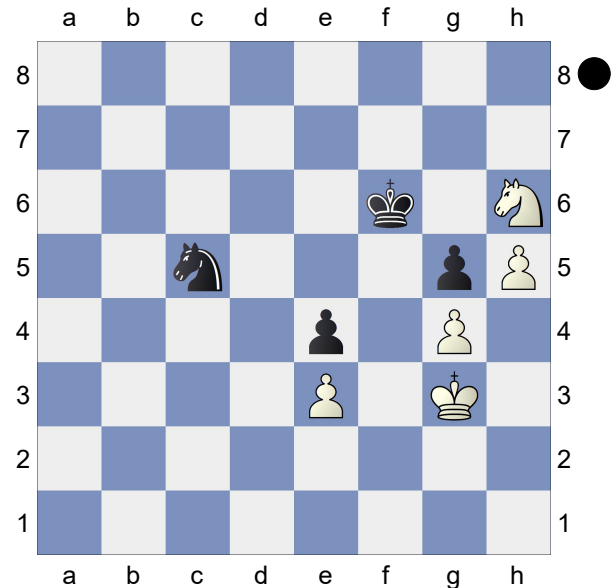


**Nxe5 37.Nc5 Nc6 38.Nxb7 Nxd4  
39.Rc7 Rxb2 40.Nd6 Rb1+ 41.Kh2  
Rb2 42.Rxf7+ Kg8 43.Rf4 Nf5  
44.Ne4 Kg7 45.g4 e5 46.Rf3 Nd4  
47.Re3 Re2 48.Kg2 Rxe3 49.fxe3  
Ne6**



**Knight and pawn endgame! Notoriously tricky. "Knight game like king game -- Kingo Bingo" as Yakob Yukhtman so eloquently put it 26 or so years ago. (I'll leave out his followup suggestion to the hapless youngster who had just bungled one!) 50.h4 h6 51.Kf3 g5 52.h5 Kf7 53.Nd6+ Kf6!**

[ 53...Kg7 54.Ke4+- ]  
**54.Nf5 Nc5= 55.Nxh6 e4+  
[ 55...Ke6 ]  
56.Kg3**



**Nd3?** Should lose. "An exercise for the reader" why the following moves draw:

[ 56...Ke6= ]  
[ 56...Ne6= ]  
[ 56...Nd7= ]  
[ 56...Na4= ]  
[ 56...Nb7= ]

**57.Nf5!+- Nc5 58.Kf2**

[ 58.Nd6! ]

**58...Nd3+ 59.Kg2?**

[ 59.Kg3+- ]

**59...Ne5!= 60.Nd6 Nxg4 61.Nxe4+**

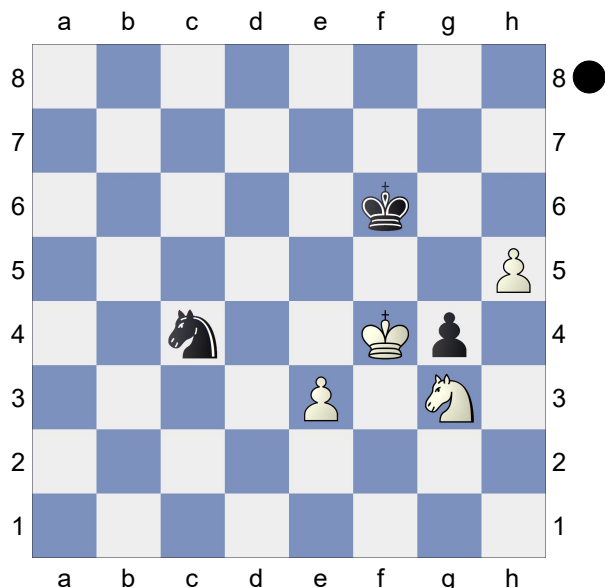
**and here the Tablebase kicks in to assure us: draw. 61...Kf5 62.Ng3+ Kf6 63.Kf3 Ne5+ 64.Ke4 Ng4 65.Kd4 Ne5 66.Kd5 g4 67.Ke4 Nc4= 68.Kf4**

(Diagram)

**Ne5?** and as White was playing (69.e4?, when 69.Ne4+! was the only move to win), it was noticed that Black had already lost on time.

[ 68...Kg7! was the only move to draw ]

**1-0**



□ Cafiero, Michael

■ Boyer, John

2025 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (2.5)

[Winslow, Elliott]

I have to include this game, as Cafiero and Boyer are, after five rounds, tied for first-second! There is a horrific blunder by each of them in their time (the blunders'); but otherwise not so half bad.

1.c4 2 c5 6:08 2.Nc3 9 g6 13 3.g3 7 Bg7 6 4.Bg2 7 Nc6 15 5.Nf3 19 Nf6 27 6.0-0 9 0-0 7 7.e3 2:56 d5 4:17 8.cxd5 1:49 Nxd5 7 9.Nxd5 3:25 Qxd5 9 10.Nd4 2:11 Qd7 41 11.Nxc6 13 bxc6 3 12.Qa4 11:55 Bb7 10 13.Rb1 2:17 a5 3:10 14.Rd1 12:56 Rfc8 14:04 15.b3 4:35 Ba6 1:17 16.d3 6:30

(Diagram)

Bc3?! 2:58

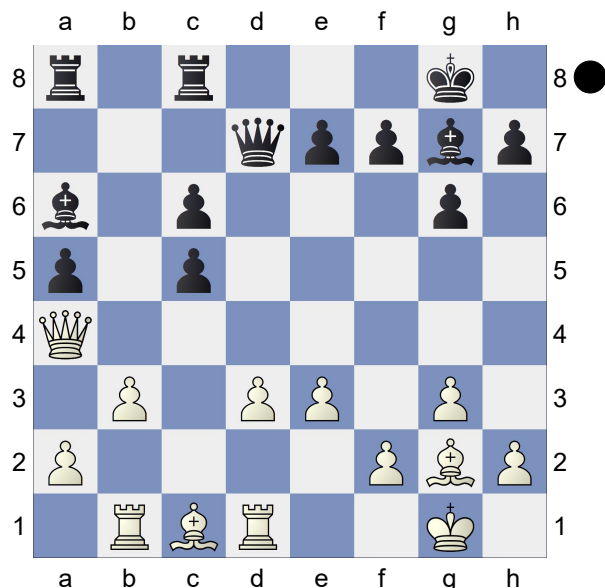
[ 16...Bb5! completely equalizes. ]

17.Qh4?! 2:58

[ 17.Qe4± ]

17...Bb5 9:54 18.a4± 3:14

[ 18.Ba3!± ]



18...Ba6 8 19.Ba3 57 Bf6 4:03 20.Qe4

3:08 Rc7? 10:35 21.Bxc5+- 2:51 Rb8

A34

1806

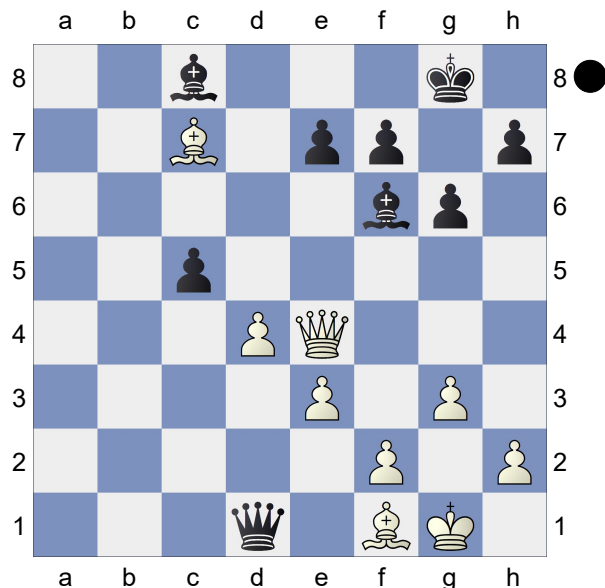
1671

1:01 22.d4 4:35 Bc8 2:26 23.b4 1:19

axb4 34 24.Rxb4 52 Rxb4 30 25.Bxb4

2 c5 29 26.Ba5 3:24 Qxa4 20 27.Bxc7

59 Qxd1+ 11 28.Bf1 10



Ba6?? 1:27 29.Qa8++- 15 Kg7 15

30.Qxa6 2 cxd4 24 31.exd4 18 Bxd4 9

32.Qd3 19 Qa1 48 33.Bf4 32 Bf6 3:55

34.Qd2 45 h5 12 35.h4 30 Qc3 1:06

36.Qxc3 23 Bxc3 2 37.Bd3 21 e6 26

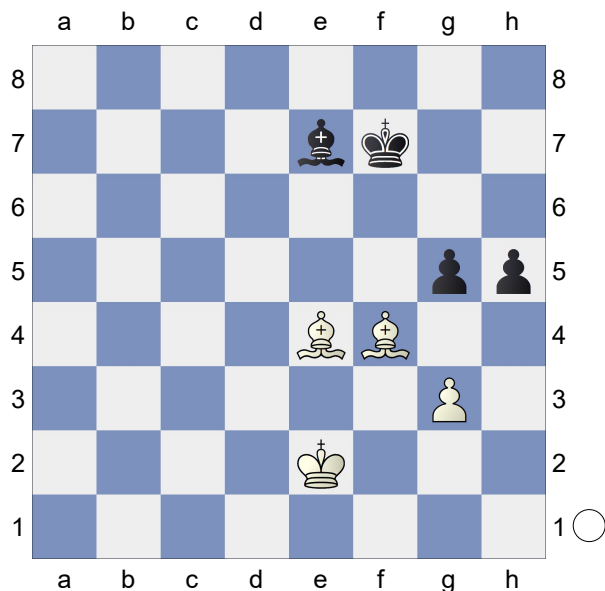
38.Kg2 14 f6 37 39.Kf3 54 Kf7 8

40.Bc1 39 Bb4 13 41.Ke2 22 Be7 29

42.f4 3:12 Bc5 40 43.Be3 1:14 Bb4 7

44.Bc4 19 Ke7 26 45.Bd2 40 Bc5 8

46.Be1 4 Bd6 14 47.Kf3 30 e5 10  
 48.Bd2 33 exf4 40 49.Bxf4 14 Bb4 5  
 50.Bd3 55 Kf7 15 51.Be3 56 Bd6 12  
 52.Bf4 13 Bb4 13 53.Ke2 14 Be7 20  
 54.Be4 8 g5 33 55.hxg5 19 fxg5 1



56.Be5?? 24 g4 51 57.Bd5+ 24 Kg6  
 12 58.Bc6 26 h4 11  
 1/2-1/2

□ Powers,Christopher

■ Karwat,Joseph

2025 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (2.16)

[Winslow,Elliott]

C01

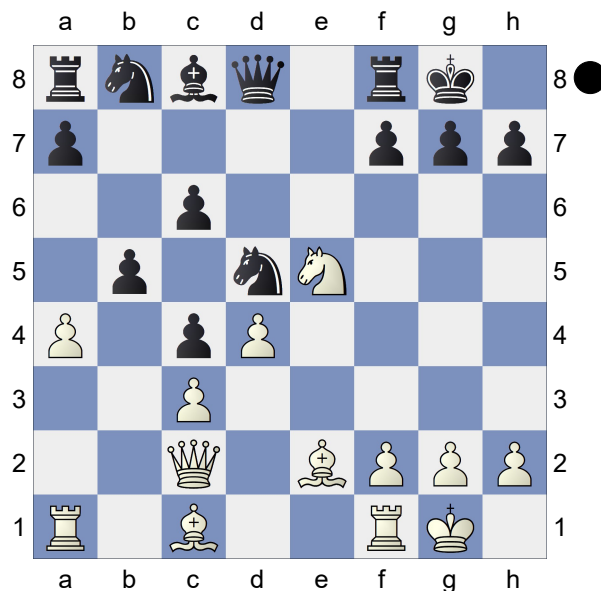
1769

1487

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.c4  
 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Be2  
 dxc4 8.0-0 Bxc3  
 [ 8...Nc6 9.Bxc4 Bg4 10.Be3 Qd7  
 11.a3 Bd6 12.h3 Bh5 13.Be2 Rad8  
 14.Rc1 h6 15.Qb3 Na5 16.Qa2  
 Rfe8 17.Bb5 c6 18.Be2 b6 19.b4  
 Nb7 20.Rfd1 Rc8 21.d5 Bxf3  
 22.Bxf3 c5 23.Be2 Qe7 24.Bb5 Qe5  
 25.g3 Re7 26.Ba6 Qh5 27.Kg2  
 Rce8 28.Bxb7 Rxb7 29.Nb5 Rd7  
 30.Nxd6 Rxd6 31.bxc5 bxc5  
 32.Bxc5 Rxd5 33.Rxd5 Nxd5  
 34.Bxa7 Qe5 35.Rc5 Qe4+ 36.Kh2

Nf6 37.Qc4 Qe1 38.Rc8 Wadsworth,  
 M (2452)-Rustemov,A (2525) Chess.  
 com INT 2023 1-0 (77) ]

9.bxc3 b5 10.a4 c6 11.Ne5 Nd5  
 12.Qc2



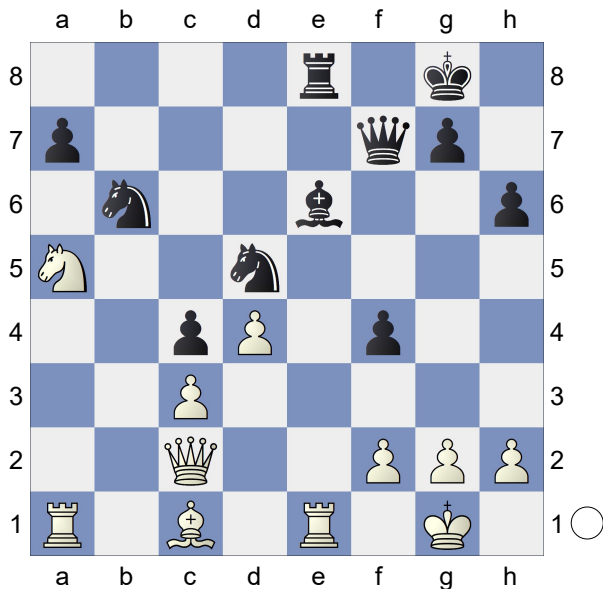
Nd7N

[ 12...f6 13.Nf3 Be6 14.Re1 Re8  
 15.Ba3 Nd7 16.Nd2 N7b6 17.axb5  
 cxb5 18.Bf3 Qd7 19.Ne4 Bf5  
 20.Qd2 Bxe4 21.Bxe4 Na4 22.Rac1  
 f5 23.Bf3 Rxe1+ 24.Rxe1 Naxc3  
 25.h4 Re8 26.Bd6 Ne4 27.Bxe4  
 Rxe4 28.Rxe4 fxe4 29.Be5 c3  
 30.Qe2 b4 31.h5 b3 32.h6 c2  
 33.Qd2 Qc6 0-1 (33) Rydstrom,T  
 (2259)-Saric,A (2503) Zagreb 2023 ]  
 13.Nxc6 Qb6 14.axb5 Qxb5 15.Na5  
 N7b6 16.Bd2 Be6 17.Bf3 Qd7 18.Be4  
 f5 19.Bf3 Rf7 20.Rfe1 Re8 21.Bc1±  
 h6? 22.Bh5+- f4 23.Bxf7+ Qxf7  
 [ 23...Bxf7 24.Rxe8+- ( 24.Bd2+- )  
 24...Qxe8 ( 24...Bxe8 25.f3 ) 25.Bd2  
 f3 26.Qd1 Bh5 27.Qe1 ]

(Diagram)

24.Ba3? =

[ 24.Nc6 Bf5 25.Qd2 f3 26.Rxe8+  
 Qxe8 27.Ne5 fxg2 28.Rxa7 ]



[ 24.Bd2 Qd7 25.Re5 ]  
 [ 24.f3 Bf5 25.Qf2 ]  
**24...f3!± 25.Bd6 g5?**  
 [ 25...Qd7! 26.Bg3 Rf8= ]  
**26.Nc6! Nd7**  
 [ 26...Qd7 27.Qg6+ ]  
**27.gxf3 Qh5 28.Ne7+ Rxe7 29.Bxe7**  
**Nf4 30.Bd6! Nd3 31.Rxe6 Qxf3**  
**32.Qe2**  
**1-0**

□ Boyer,John

■ Dees,Calvin

2025 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (5.5)

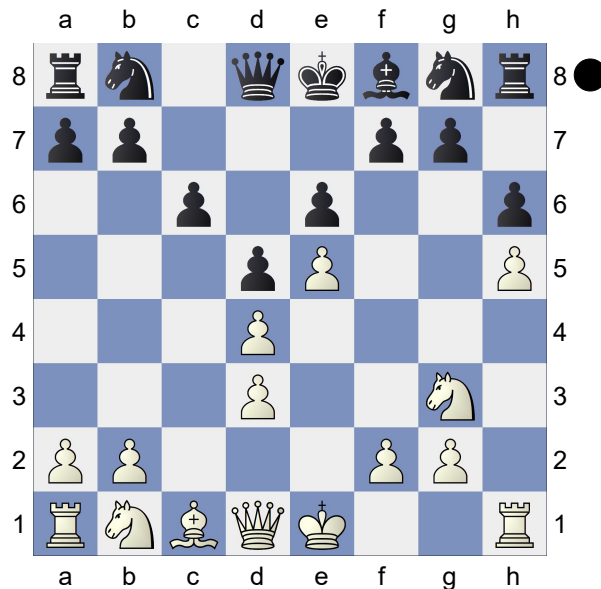
[Winslow,Elliott]

Dees might have repeated his great result last time, and had some real chances to hold. But missing them, Boyer got in the way with a nice finish.

**1.e4 1 c6 5 2.d4 13 d5 6 3.e5 3 Bf5 6**  
**4.Ne2 12 e6 59 5.Ng3 13 Bg6 2:30**  
**6.h4 27 h6 2:29 7.h5 1:06 Bh7 36**  
**8.Bd3 6 Bxd3 42 9.cxd3 5**

(Diagram)

**Bb4+ 13:41 B12: Caro-Kann: Advance**



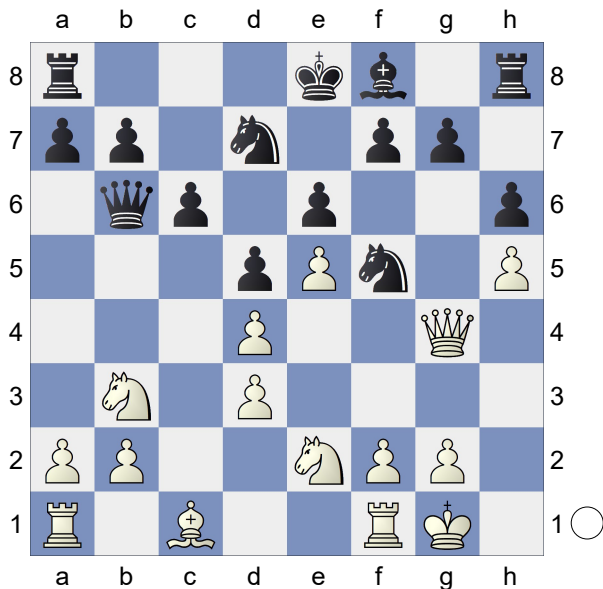
Variation.

[ 9...Ne7± ]  
**10.Nd2 1:49 Qb6N 13:43**  
 [ 10...c5 ]  
 [Predecessor: 10...Ne7 11.Qg4 0-0  
 12.0-0 f5 13.exf6 Rxf6 14.Nf3 Nf5  
 15.Bf4 Nd7 16.a3 Ba5 17.Rae1  
 Bxe1 18.Rxe1 1-0 (54) Calle Ordonez,  
 A (1968)-Rahman,A (2200) London  
 2017 ]  
**11.Qg4± 3:06 Bf8 12:57 White is better.**  
**12.Ne2 3:59**  
 [ 12.Nb3± ]  
**12...Ne7± 1:27 13.0-0 43 Nf5 1:39**  
**14.Nb3 46**  
 [ 14.Nf3± ]  
**14...Nd7 1:55**  
 [Better is 14...a5± ]

(Diagram)

**15.Ng3!+- 2:19 Nxg3 2:34 16.Qxg3 2**  
 [ 16.fxg3± Black must now prevent  
 Bd2. a5 ( 16...Nxe5? 17.Qf4+- )  
 17.Kh2 ]  
**16...0-0-0 2:05 17.Bd2 55**  
 [ 17.Qf3± ]  
**17...Re8 17:09**  
 [ 17...Bb4!= ]





18.Ba5↑ 2:15 White is really pushing.

18...Qb5 1:02 19.Qf4 2:07

[ 19.Bc3± ]

19...b6 5:23

[ 19...Qxd3= keeps the balance.

20.Qxf7 Re7 ]

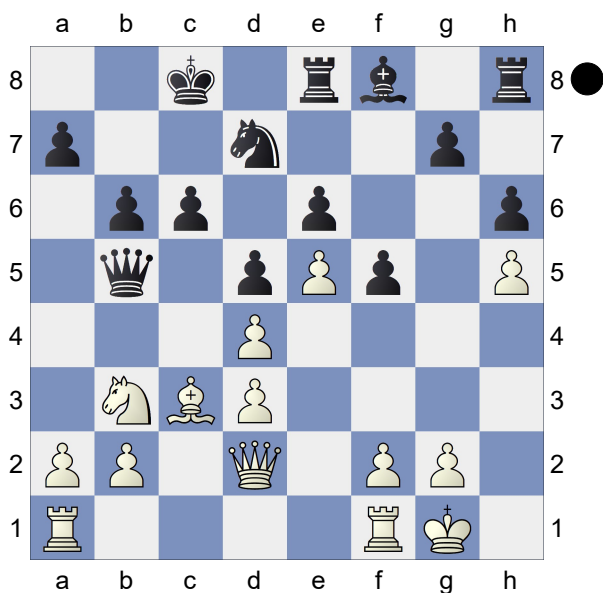
20.Bc3 48

[ 20.Qxf7?! Re7 21.Qg6 bxa5= ]

20...f5 4:11

[ 20...Qxd3± 21.Qxf7 Re7 ]

21.Qd2 1:32



Be7 2:19 22.Qc2 24

[ 22.Nc1± ]

22...c5? 3:46

[ 22...Qa4!= ]

23.a4+- 27 Qc6 29 24.a5 32 b5 2:43

[ 24...c4 ]

25.dxc5 1:01 a6 5:17 26.d4? 1:02

[ White should try 26.Nd4+- Qc7

27.Nxe6 ]

26...Rhg8 1:08 27.Nc1 10 g5 32

[ 27...Nb8± ]

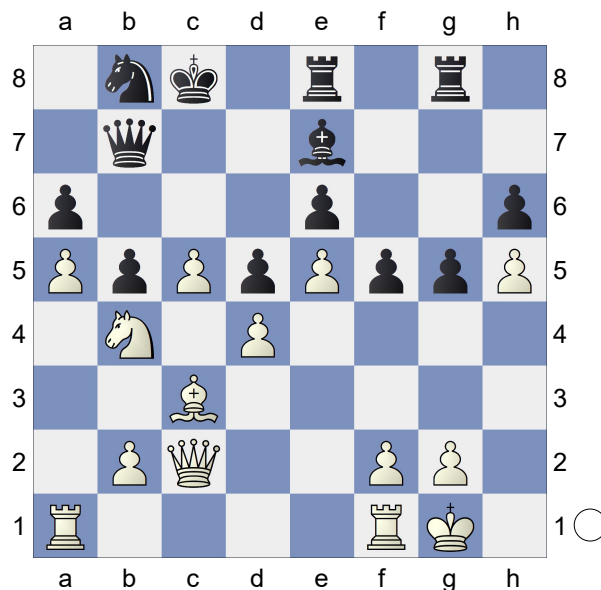
28.Nd3± 9 Qb7? 1:26

[ 28...Nb8± 29.Nb4 Qd7 ]

29.Nb4? 10

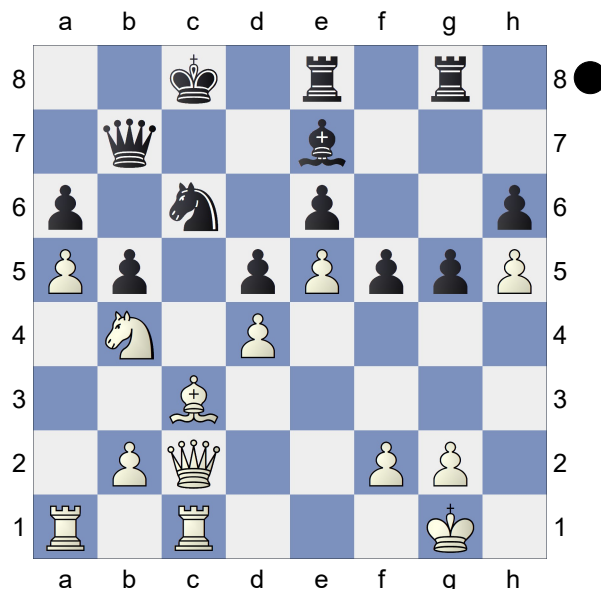
[ 29.Rac1+- ]

29...Nb8 29



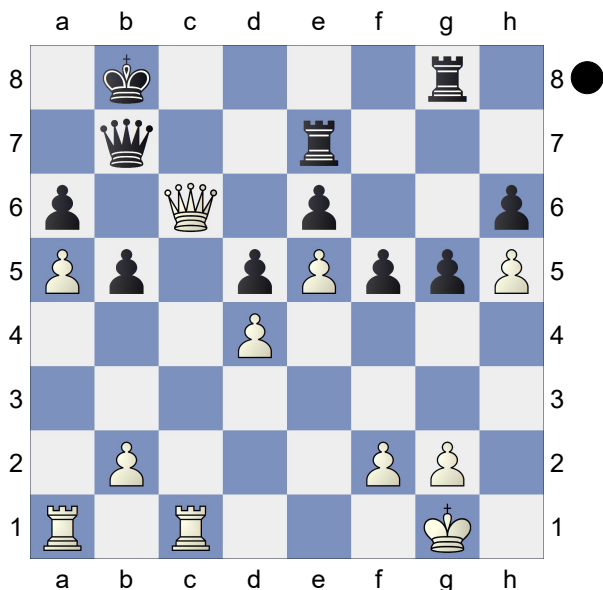
30.c6 9:29 White is more active.

30...Nxc6= 52 31.Rfc1 15

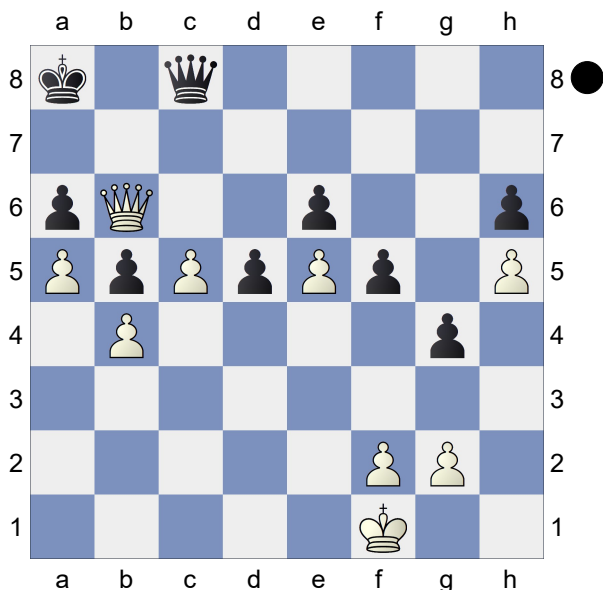


Nxb4?? 57

[ 31...Kb8!= 32.Nxc6+ Qxc6 ]  
**32.Bxb4+- 10 Kb8 16**  
 [ 32...Kd7 might work better. ]  
**33.Bxe7 55 Rxe7 17 34.Qc6 52**



**A decisive entry. 34...Rc8 46 35.Qd6+ 6**  
**Rec7 53 36.Rc5 19 Ka7 31 37.Rac1 41**  
**Rxc5 28 38.Rxc5 12 Rxc5 31 39.dxc5**  
**8 White mates. 39...Qc8 31 40.b4 23**  
**Ka8 2:03 41.Qb6 14 g4 52 42.Kf1 14**  
 [ 42.c6 f4 43.c7 Qb7 44.Qxe6  
 ( 44.Qd6 Qc8+- ) 44...Qxc7 45.Qxa6+  
 Kb8 46.Qb6+ ( 46.Qxh6 Qxe5  
 47.Qf8+ Kc7+-; 46.Qxb5+ Ka8+- )  
 46...Qxb6 47.axb6 ]



It's zugzwang! (I think) Weighted Error  
 Value: White=0.54/Black=0.99  
**1-0**

**B32**  
**1615**  
**1806**  
 Mays-Smith, Isaac S  
 Cafiero, Michael  
 2025 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (5.15)  
 [TA/(Winslow, Elliott)]

I'm letting "Tactical Analysis" handle a  
 couple of the games... **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3**  
**Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d6**  
**6.c4 Nf6 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3 Be7 9.Be2**  
**Nd4 10.0-0 Nxe2+ 11.Qxe2 0-0 12.f3**  
**Be6 13.Be3 Ne8**

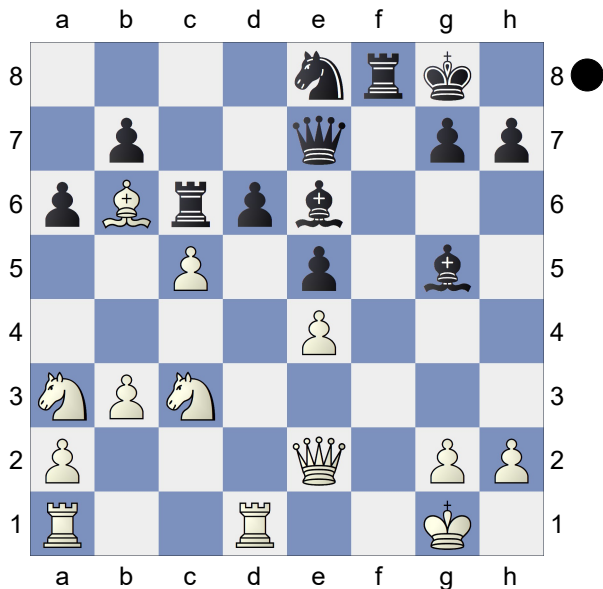
[ 13...Rc8= ]  
**14.Na4N**  
 [ 14.Rac1± ]  
 [ 14.Qd2 h6 15.Rfd1 Bg5 16.Bxg5  
 Qxg5 17.Qxg5 hxg5 18.h3 g6  
 19.Rac1 f5 20.b3 g4 21.hxg4 fxg4  
 22.fxg4 Bxg4 ½-½ (35) Kreuzholz, M  
 (2260)-Michna, C (2235) Germany  
 1996 ]

**14...Rc8 15.b3 f5 The position is equal.**  
**16.Rfd1?**  
 [ 16.Nb6= Rc6 17.Nd5 ]  
**16...fxe4+- 17.fxe4 Bg5**  
 [ 17...Nf6+- 18.Re1 b5 ( 18...Nxe4?  
 19.Bb6+- ) ]

**18.Bb6**  
 [ 18.Rf1= feels stronger. ]  
**18...Qe7 19.Nc3 Rc6**  
 [ 19...Nf6 20.Nd5 Qf7 ]  
**20.c5?**

(Diagram)

Black keeps a firm grip on the game.  
**20...Nf6**  
 [ 20...dxc5 21.Bd8 Qxd8 22.Rxd8  
 Bxd8 23.Nc4± ]  
 [Black should try 20...Bf4!-+]

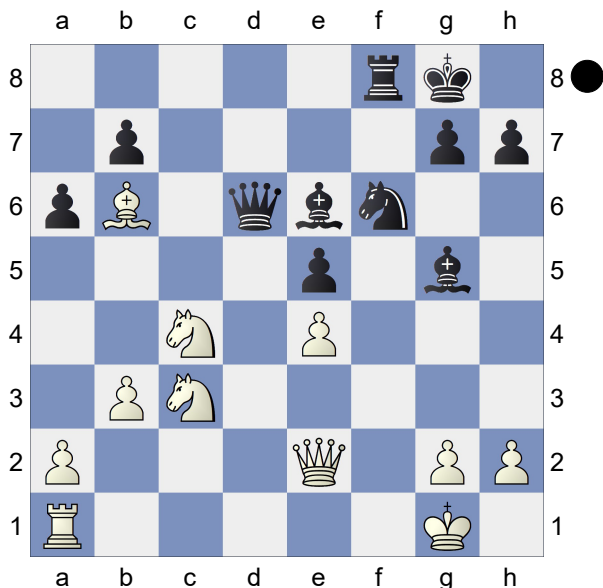


aiming for ...Qh4. 21.Nd5 Bxd5  
22.exd5 Rxb6 23.cxb6 Qh4 ]

**21.Rxd6?**

[ 21.Nd5 7 Qe8 22.Nxf6+ Bxf6  
23.Rxd6 ]

**21...Rxd6 22.cxd6 Qxd6 23.Nc4**



**Qc6 24.Na4 Bxc4**

[ Less strong is 24...Nxe4 25.Nxe5  
Qd5 26.Re1 7  
[ 24...Qxe4 25.Qxe4 Nxe4  
26.Nxe5 7 ]

**25.Qxc4+ Qxc4 26.bxc4 Nxe4**

[ Don't do 26...Rc8 27.c5-+ ]

**27.Rf1**

[ 27.Rd1 ]

**27...Rxf1+-+ 28.Kxf1 Endgame KBN-  
KBN. Black is a pawn up. 28...Nd2+  
29.Ke2 Nxc4 30.Bc7 Be7 31.Kd3 b5  
32.Nc3 Kf7 33.Ke4 Ke6 34.g4 Bb4  
35.Kd3 Bxc3 36.Kxc3 Ne3 37.Kd3  
Nxc4 38.Ke4 Nf6+ 39.Ke3 Nd5+  
Weighted Error Value: White=0.92/  
Black=0.34  
0-1**

**C08**

□ **Menchchikov,Alexander Borisovich**  
■ **Mehta,Soham** **1407**  
2025 Winter TNM: u1600 (4.6) 25.11.25  
[Winslow,Elliott]

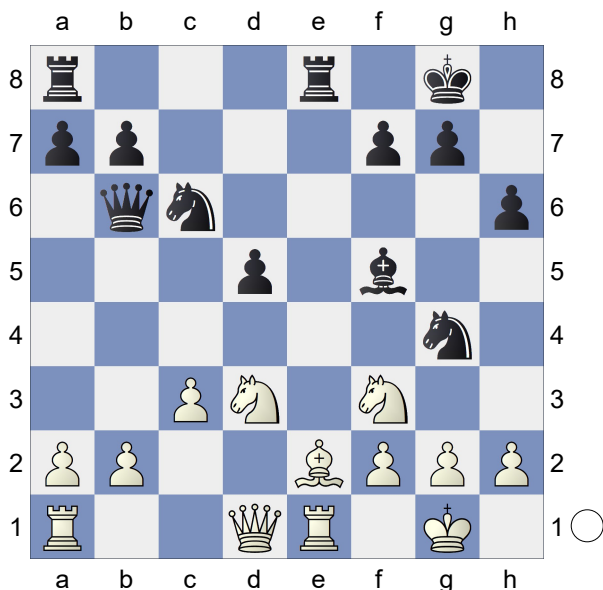
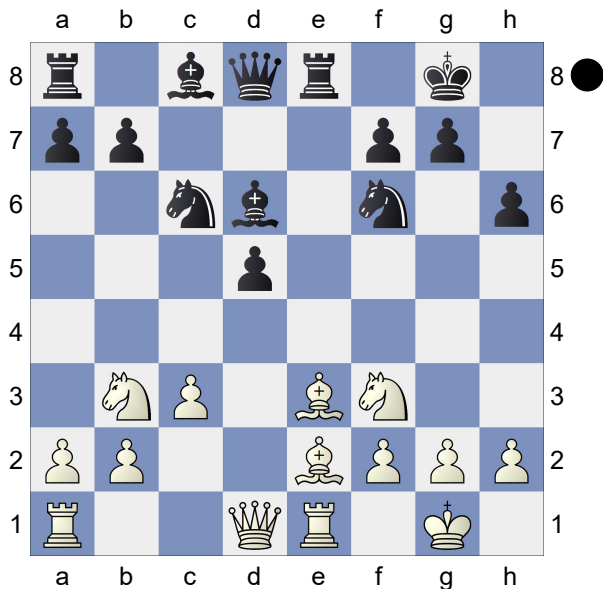
I almost didn't give this important game  
a closer look! 1.e4 2 e6 1:07 2.d4 6 d5  
5 3.Nd2 5 c5 9 4.exd5 31 exd5 1:47  
5.Ngf3 1:10 Nf6 1:36 6.Be2 4:34  
[ 6.Bb5+! ]  
6...Nc6 54 7.dxc5?! 1:46 Volunteering  
what is usually a free tempo.  
[ As in: 7.0-0 Be7 8.dxc5 Bxc5 ]  
7...Bxc5 7 8.Nb3 1:04 Bd6 54  
[ Given the extra move, Black could  
venture 8...Bb6 with some advantage  
even. ]  
9.0-0 2:50 h6 47 10.Re1 5:14 0-0 29  
11.c3 1:26 Re8 3:22 12.Be3 5:29

(Diagram)

**Ng4!? 3:31** Solid play like 12...Bf5 was  
better, but the complications are  
interesting. 13.Bc5! 2:34 Bxc5 7:16  
[ 13...Bc7!? ]  
14.Nxc5 26 Qb6 4:08 15.Nd3?! 7:42  
[ Comp says 15.b4!? with a tiny plus  
which evaporates as I type. ]  
15...Bf5 2:18

(Diagram)





**16.Qb3?** 5:17

[ 16.Qc2?? Nxf2-+ ]

[ 16.Qd2! Nf6 17.Bf1 Be4 18.Qe3 hangs on "nicely" although Black is fine. ]

**16...Qxb3-+ 6:01** Good enough for a winning advantage

[but 16...Rxe2! 17.Rxe2 Bxd3! 18.Rd2 Bc4 19.Qxb6 axb6-+ was a lot winner. ]

**17.axb3 10 Rad8?** 9 Missing the shot.

[ 17...Rxe2! The only move. 18.Rxe2 Bxd3 19.Rd2 Be4 20.Nd4 Nge5 21.f3 Bh7 22.Rad1 Re8 23.Nb5 Re7 24.Rxd5?! Bc2-+ ]

**18.b4?** 5:48

[ 18.Nc5!± ]

**18...a6?** 3:03

[ 18...Rxe2! ]

**19.Rad1?!= 1:50**

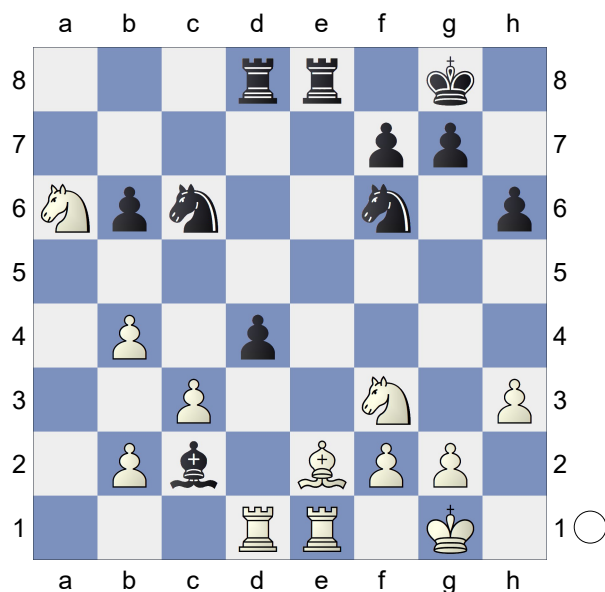
[ 19.Nc5± ]

**19...d4= 3:36 20.h3 4:52 Nf6 33**

**21.Nc5 2:45 b6?!± 6:48**

[ 21...dxc3 22.bxc3 Rxd1 23.Bxd1 Rxe1+ 24.Nxe1 Nd5 ]

**22.Nxa6± 2:34 Bc2 4:21**



**23.Rxd4?? 16:27**

[ 23.Rd2 Ba4 24.Nc7 Re7 25.Bb5!± ]

**23...Nxd4-+ 38** I'll stop looking and let Mehta "claim" his victory :-)

**24.Nxd4 11** No, I must keep looking... **24...Rxd4! 3:53 25.cxd4 18 Bd3 6 26.Bxd3 57 Rxe1+ 11 27.Kh2 Rd1 46 28.Bc4 2:30 Rxd4 22 29.b3 5 Ne4 1:11 30.Nc7 45**

(Diagram)

**Nxf2 40**

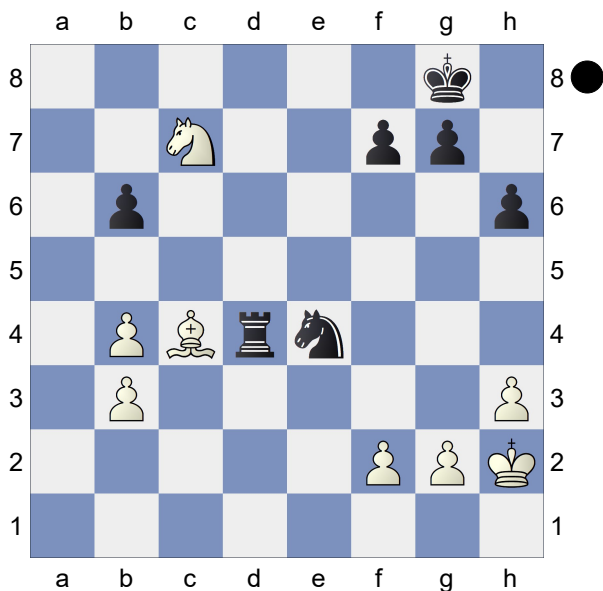
[ 30...Nd6 ]

[ 30...Nd2 ]

[ 30...Kf8 ]

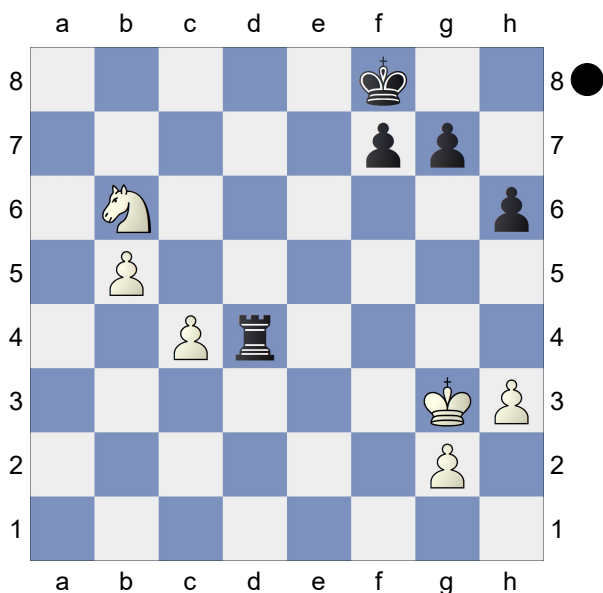
**31.Nd5 33 Nd3 1:34**

[ 31...b5 32.Ne7+ Kf8 33.Nc6 Rd6 34.Bxb5 Ne4 35.Ba4 Nc3 36.b5 Nd5 ]



32.b5 42 Ne5 49 33.Nxb6 15 Nxc4 15  
[ 33...Kf8 ]

34.bxc4 10 Kf8 2:02 35.Kg3 2:07



h5?! 36

[ 35...Ke7 ]

36.Kf3 23 Ke7 42 37.Ke3 15 Rd1 19

38.c5 3:37

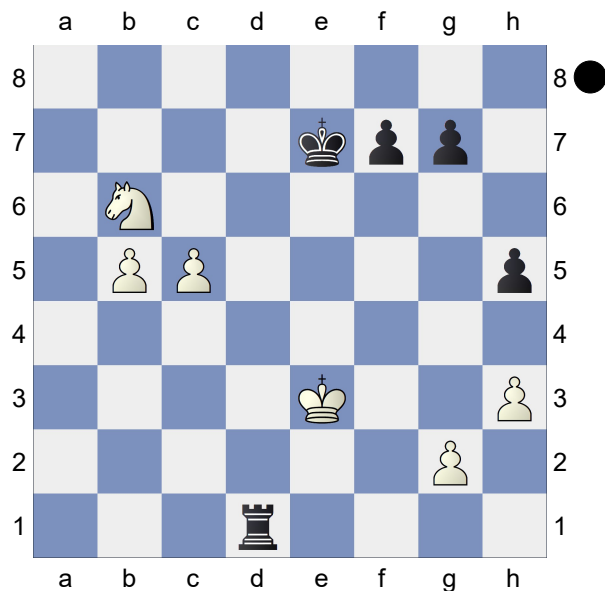
(Diagram)

Black has to be a bit careful... 38...Rb1?

46

[ 38...Ke6! 39.Na4 Rd5 ( 39...Rg1 )  
40.b6 Kd7 41.b7 Kc7 ]

39.Nd5+ 21



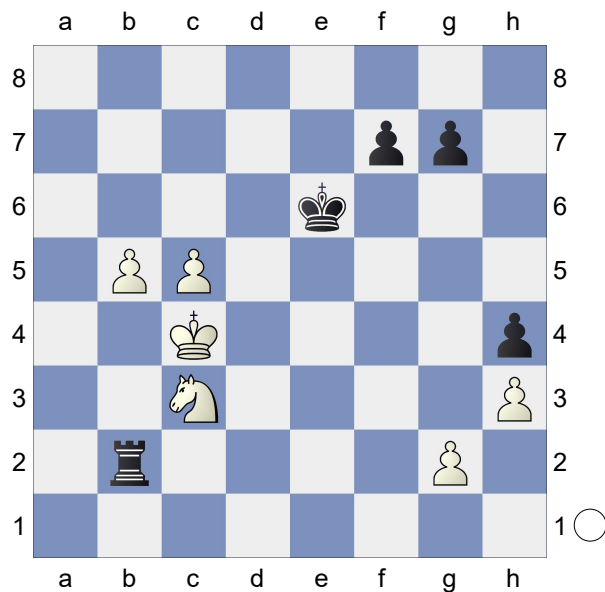
[ 39.Nc8+! is even easier: Kd7  
40.Nd6= Rb2 41.Ke4! ]

39...Ke6 1:20 40.Nc3 34 Rb3= 47  
[ 40...Rb4 ]

41.Kd4 9

[ 41.Kd3 ]

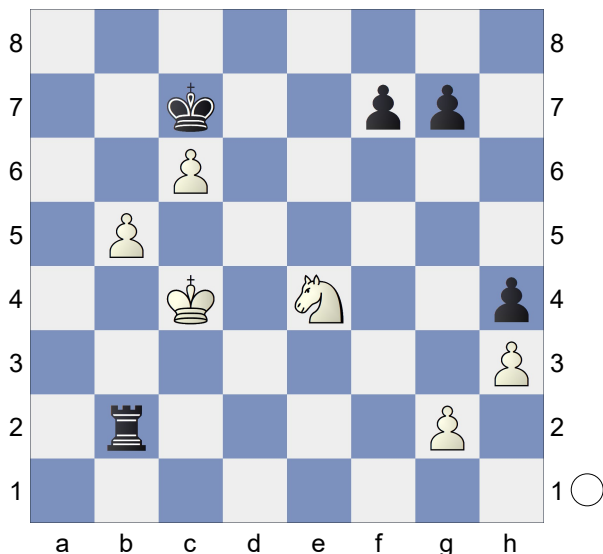
41...h4= 53 It's all zeroes now 42.Kc4 37  
Rb2 31



43.c6 1:43 Asking for trouble...

[ 43.b6! Kd7! (only move) 44.Nd5!  
Rxc2 45.Nb4

A) 45...Rb2 46.c6+ Kc8 47.b7+  
Kb8 48.Na6+ Ka7= just don't  
promote! 49.Nc5 ( 49.Nc7;  
49.Nb4 );



There's only one move to hold...

45.Kc5? 3:11

[Amazingly it's 45.g4!! hxc3

46.Nxg3= Remember that Rook vs. Knight (no pawns for the rook) is a draw... ]

45...Rc2+! 11 46.Kd5 20 Rxc2 26  
47.Kc5 5:42 Rc2+ 19 48.Kd5 12 Kb6  
21 49.Nd6 48 Rc3 2:34 50.Kd4 2:06  
Rxc3 1:04 51.Nc4+ 20 Kc7 18 52.Kc5  
45 Rc3 1:36 53.b6+ 59 Kc8 47 54.Kb5  
1:59 Rxc4 3:03 55.Kxc4 9 h3 23  
56.Kd5 3 h2 20 57.Kd6 4 h1Q 25  
58.b7+ 32 Kb8 13 Well done Soham!  
And Alex, so close!! And frankly, I'd  
never have worked this out without the  
help of the computer. (which crashed  
with some error code in the middle of  
the analysis!)

**0-1**

☐ **Mehta, Soham**

■ Fitzgerald, William

2025 Winter TNM: u1600 (5.6) 02.12.25  
[Winslow, Elliott]

E20

1407

1336

The two leaders meet, and Fitzgerald falls off his (Trojan?) horse and gets hit with the Greek Gift -- and I'm not talking baklava!

1.d4 2.Nf6 3.c4 4.e6 5.Nc3 6.Bb4 7.f3 8.d5 9.a3 10.Be7

[ 5...Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 0-0 7.cxd5 exd5  
( 7...Nxd5; 7...Nh5!? ) 8.e3 ]

6.e4 1:12 dxe4 9:55 7.fxe4 16 0-0 4  
[ 7...c5 ]

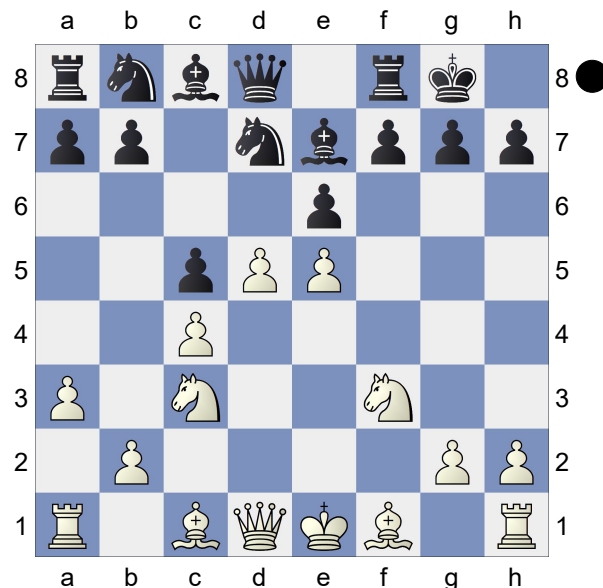
8.Nf3 1:08 c5 37 9.e5 3:22

[ 9.d5!± ]

9...Nfd7 4:45

[ 9...Ng4!? ]

10.d5?! 12



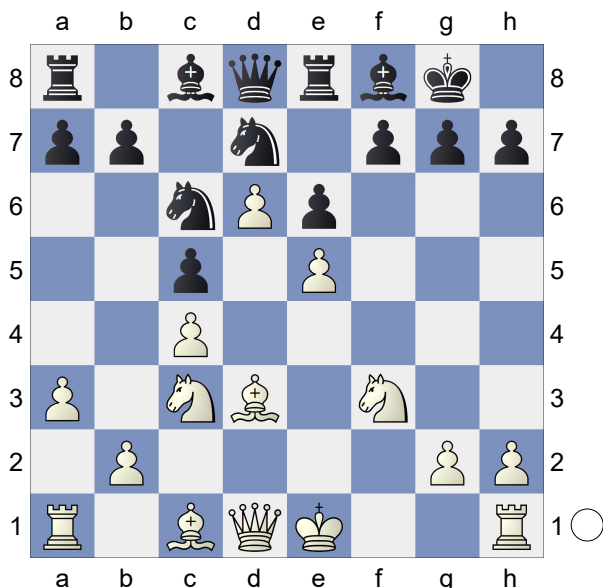
Re8?? 3

[ 10...exd5 11.cxd5 ( 11.Nxd5!?)=  
11...Nxe5! 12.Nxe5 Bh4+ 13.g3 Re8  
14.Be2! ( 14.Qh5 Bf6 15.Qxf7+ Kh8  
16.Be2 Rxe5 17.0-0 Nd7 $\bar{f}$  )  
14...Rxe5 15.Bf4 Rf5= ]

**11.d6+- 32 Bf8 5 12.Bd3 25 Nc6 1:03**

(Diagram)





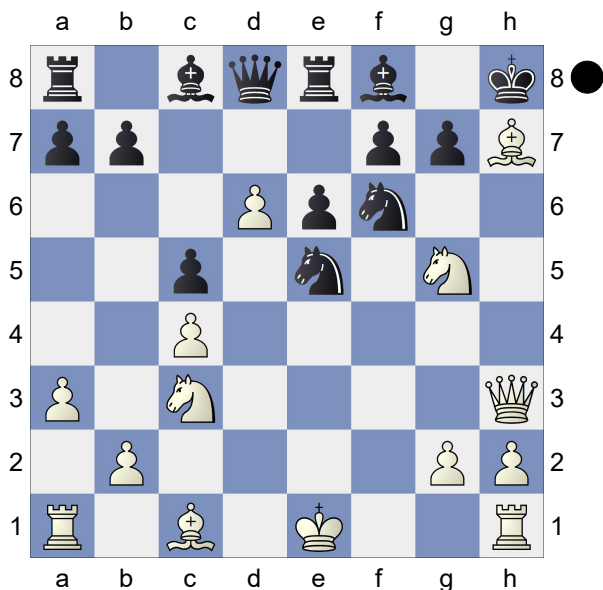
**13.Bxh7+ 1:20 Kh8 3:47**

[ 13...Kxh7 14.Ng5+ Kg8 ( 14...Kg6 15.Qd3+ f5 16.exf6+ Kxf6 17.Rf1+ Ke5 18.Nf7# ) 15.Qh5 Qxg5 ]

**14.Ng5 27 Ncxe5 47 15.Qh5 54 Nf6**

**2:05 16.Qh3 4:05**

[ 16.Qh4! Bxd6 17.Bf4 g6 18.Rd1+- ]



**16...Neg4?? 8:45**

[ 16...Nfg4 17.Bf4 Nh6 18.0-0+- ]

**17.Nxf7# 21** And thus Mehta's position in clear first is established. But with three players a half point behind and two rounds to go, it's still quite up in the

air.  
1-0

**B22**

□ **Braithwaite, Andrew**

**1392**

■ **Menchtchikov, A**

**1338**

2025 Winter TNM: u1600 (5.27) 02.12.25

[Menchtchikov, Alexander]

Menchtchikov recovered from his loss last round, but it could have been bad. Braithwaite established a serious bind for a pawn, only to let it slip and fall. **1.e4 c5 2.c3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Bc4 Nb6 7.Bb3 dxc3?! White's strategy is a sort of backdoor Morra Gambit, with the pawn already on e5, constraining Black's development even further. Black has to be careful not to get crushed, but also to not fall into some difficult to play middlegame.**

[ 7...d5 8.exd6 Qxd6 9.0-0 Be6

**A) 10.Bxe6** Qxe6 is the older way of playing it 11.Nxd4 Nxd4 12.Qxd4 Rd8 13.Qh4 Qe2!? ( 13...h5! );

**B) 10.Na3!?** is the Modern Main Line in this particular Sicilian Defence, Morra Gambit Declined -- in fact I (Winslow) just played the Black side (and really, \*really\* should have lost) in Berkeley on Friday. ]

**8.Nxc3 g6? 9.0-0?!**

[ 9.Ng5! e6 ( 9...Nxe5 10.Bf4 Nec4 11.Bxc4 Nxc4 12.Qd4+- ) 10.Nge4 ]

**9...Bg7! 10.Qe2? 0-0 11.Bg5 a6?**

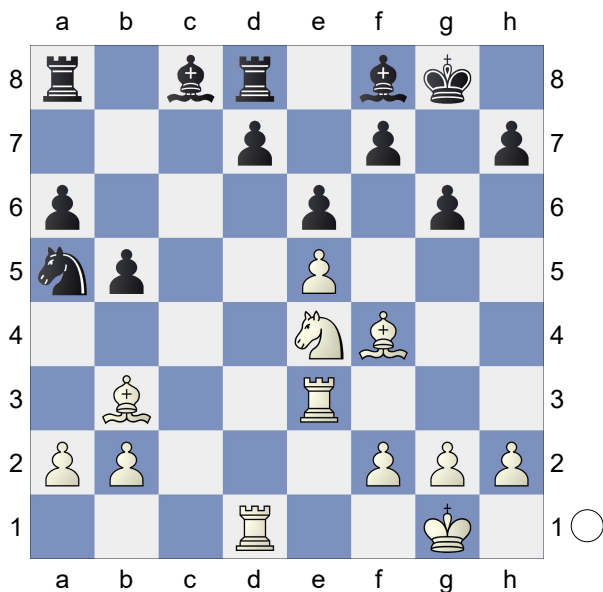
This was my final opportunity to push d6 or d5

[ 11...d5 12.e6 ( 12.exd6 Qxd6 13.Rfd1 Qb4 ) ]

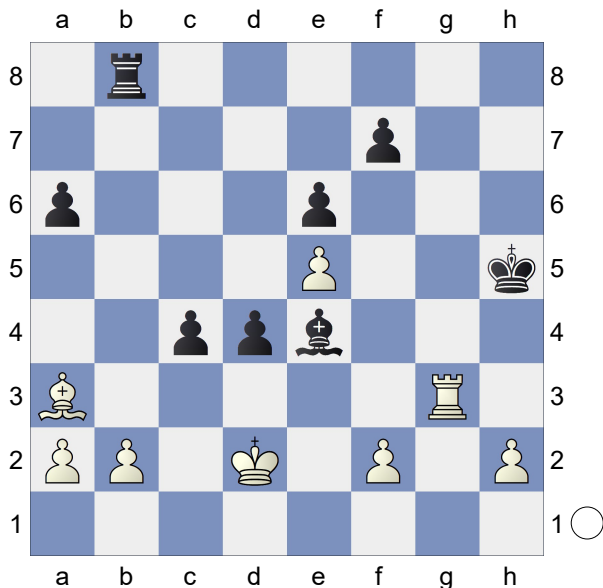
[ 11...d6 ]

**12.Rfd1 Qc7?! 13.Bf4 Na5 14.Nd5?! Nxd5 15.Bxd5 Nc6 16.Rac1 Qa5?!**

17.Qe3 Rd8?! 18.Rc5?! Qb6 19.Ng5  
e6 20.Bb3 Bf8? 21.Rc3? Qxe3  
22.Rxe3 b5 23.Ne4 Na5



24.Nf6+! Kg7 25.Red3? d5 26.Rc1  
Nc4 27.Bxc4?! bxc4 28.Rh3 h5  
29.g4 Be7 30.Bg5! Rh8? 31.gxh5  
gxh5 32.Nxh5+ Rxh5 33.Rxh5 Kg6!  
34.Bxe7 Kxh5 35.Rc3 Bd7 36.Rg3  
d4 37.Kf1?! Rb8 38.Ba3?! Bc6  
39.Ke1 Bd5? 40.Kd2 Be4

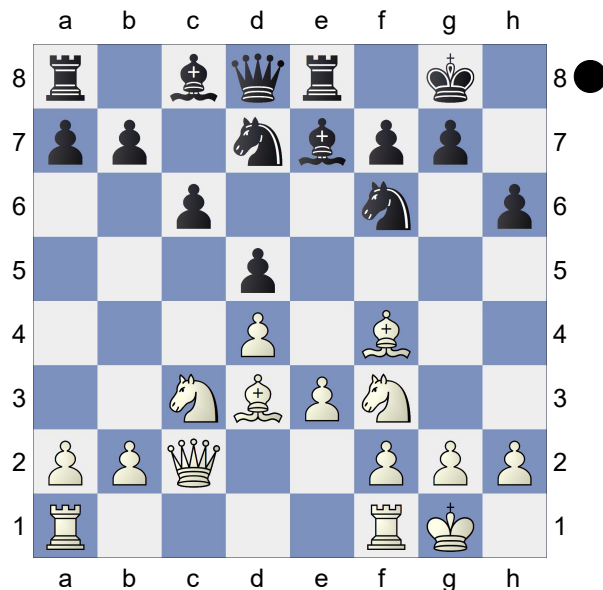


41.Rg7 Bg6! Δ...Kh6 42.Bd6 Rxb2+  
43.Kc1?! Rxf2 44.Bc5 Rf4  
[ 44...Rf1+ 45.Kd2 c3+ 46.Ke2 c2  
47.Ba3 d3+ 48.Kxf1 d2 ]

45.Rg8 c3 46.Ra8? Rf1#  
0-1

□ Winslow,Elliott D36 2207  
■ Chen,Quincy 2050  
2025 Winter TNM: 2000+ (4.2) 25.11.25  
[Winslow,Elliott]

Quincy might not have had his shot at  
Lavi had I been conscious the round  
before; then again, he might be in clear  
second had he won this! 1.d4 8 d5 10  
2.c4 9 e6 4 3.Nc3 12 Nf6 12 4.cxd5  
17 exd5 6 5.Bg5 8 Be7 1:20 6.e3 15  
0-0 1:17 7.Bd3 1:12 c6 3:07 8.Qc2  
1:03 h6 23 9.Bf4 1:02 Nbd7 2:14  
10.Nf3 1:44 Re8 1:24 11.0-0 3:23



Nh5? 2:58 Incredibly this has been  
played 324(!!) times according to the  
Chessbase database - and one  
transposition (I wonder how \*that\*  
happened). It's a thematic trap, which  
happens in various Queen's Gambit  
Declined positions. I had Roger Smith  
fall into it earlier this year, only with my  
knight on e2, not f3. Roger got serious  
counterplay before it fell back into lost.  
The day before that game I had

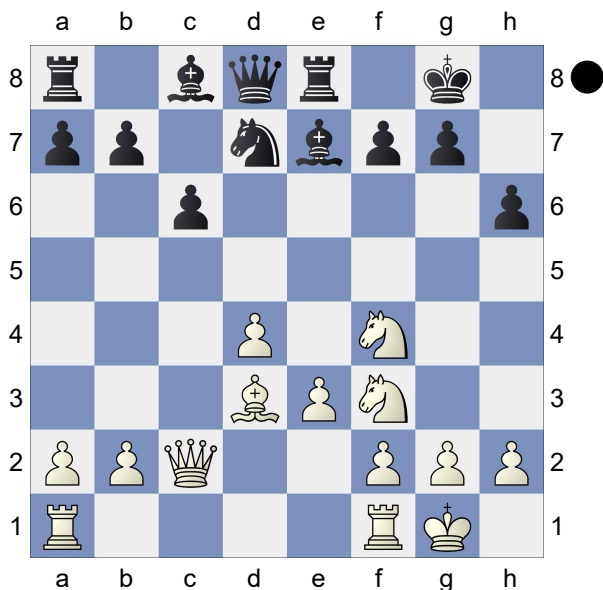
happened to read that Akiva Rubinstein fell into this trap *\*twice\**! **12.Nxd5+- 19**

[Incredibly Esipenko -- yes, who just got one of the three spaces into the Candidates via the World Cup that is just ended -- missed the simple win of a pawn and played the 2nd most popular move (and significantly worse) here, 12.Be5?± against Boris Gelfand, admittedly in a blitz game, on Lichess in 2020; he won anyway. Gelfand is a huge worshipper of Rubinstein, but this is taking it too far. ]

**12...Nxf4 6:21**

[ 12...cxd5?? 13.Bc7 In the 1969 National High School Championship, against Kent Goulding, with neither side having castled and my knight still on g1, I played 10.Nxd5?? cxd5 11. Bc7 and was down a piece after 11... Bb4+. I went on to win. I'd like to believe I'm a little sharper tactically after 56 years, but maybe not! ]

**13.Nxf4 9:28**



According to Stockfish 17.1 it's a borderline won game (i.e. not even +2). Meanwhile, I've been plowing through Shankland's latest book, "Converting an Extra Pawn in Chess," which is all about the current situation! To drastically

summarize, he has one (1) Stabilize (2) Trade the right pieces (3) determine what the extra pawn's job is. (Hint: it's often not "make a passed pawn and queen it.") It's a *\*very\** good book! But this game is not exactly a convincing endorsement. But I haven't finished the book! **13...Nf6 14 14.Bc4?! 3:13** Most frequently played, but somewhat of a lemon.

[ 14.h3+- ]

[ 14.Ne2+- ]

[And best (but requiring some levitation) is 14.e4! Bg4 15.Ne5! Qxd4 16.Nxf7!+- ]

**14...Nd5?!+- 4:38**

[ 14...Bd6± Already White is "only" plus over minus now. ]

**15.Bxd5?! 3:53**

[ 15.Ne5!+- ]

[And even better, 15.Qb3!+- ]

**15...cxd5 37 16.Qb3?!± 1:09**

[ 16.h3+- is best, with ]

[ 16.Rfc1+- ]

[and 16.Rfe1+- up there. ]

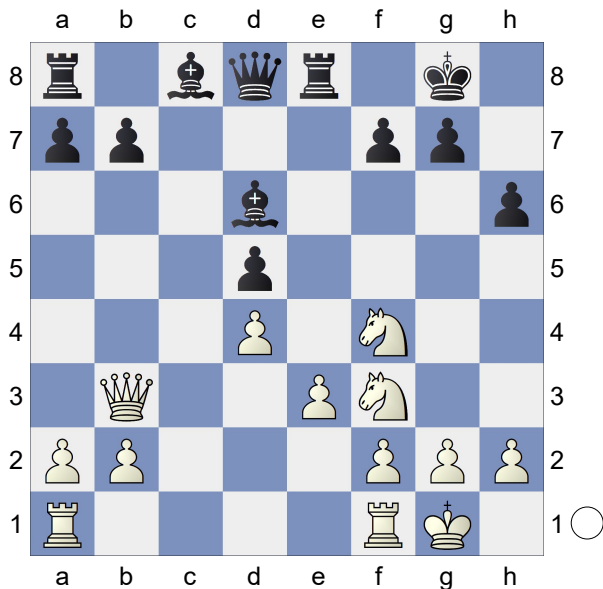
**16...Bd6!N 2:02**

[at least I've got company: 16...Be6? 17.Nxe6 fxe6 18.Qxb7 Rb8 19.Qa6 Rb6 20.Qe2 Bd6 21.Ne1 e5 22.dxe5 Bxe5 23.Nd3 Bb8 24.Qh5 Re4 25.g3 d4 26.Qf5 Re8 27.e4 Rf6 28.Qg4 Qa5 29.Rfe1 Qb5 30.Rad1 h5 31.Qe2 h4 32.e5 hxc3 33.hxc3 Rh6 34.Kg2 Qd7 35.Rh1 Re6 36.Qe4 Rc6 37.Rxh6 Rxh6 38.Nf4 Qe7 39.Rxd4 Bxe5 40.Qd5+ 1-0 (40) Rocha,A-Holzmann,L Brasilia 1964 ]

(Diagram)

**17.Qxd5?! 5:42** I had it all worked out, except I forgot about a move; he played it and I panicked, thought I was lost, and



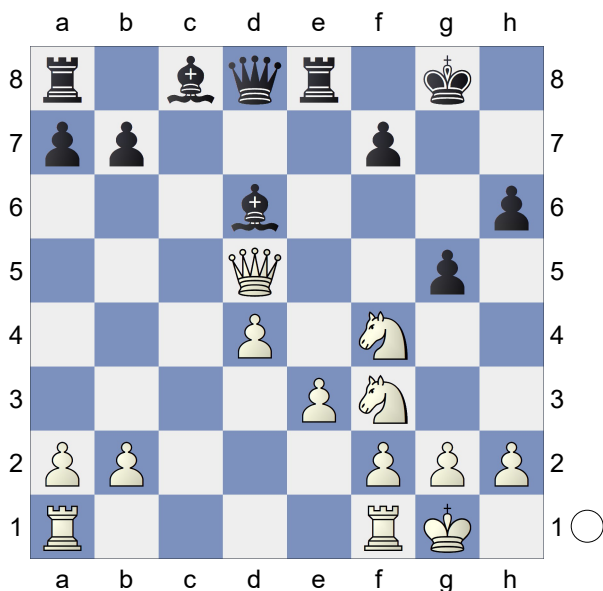


played for "compensation".

[ 17.Ne5± Bxe5 18.dxe5 Rxe5  
19.Rfd1 This is the sort of positional  
advantage I'd enjoy. Maybe. ]

[ 17.Rfe1± Bxf4 18.exf4 Be6 19.Ne5  
f6 ]

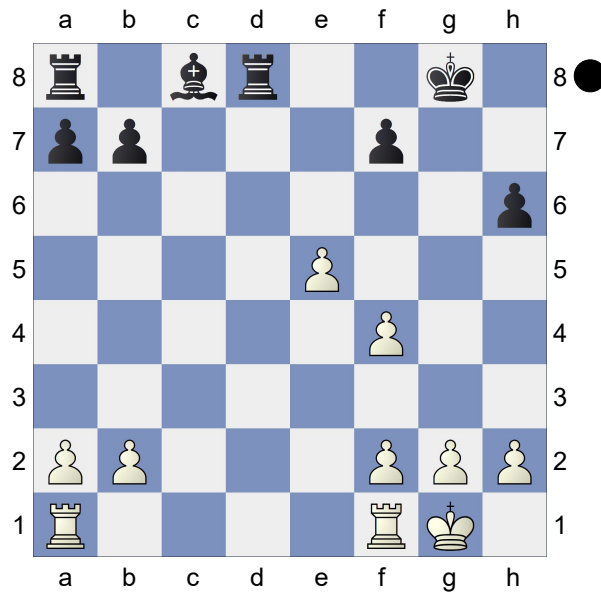
17...g5? 6:54



I saw this just after I played my previous -  
- but I \*didn't\* see that in fact it's a  
mistake! 18.Ne5?? 14

[ I can't understand how I overlooked  
18.Nh5! Bxh2+?? ( 18...Bg4!?  
19.Ng3 Bxg3 20.Qxd8 Bxf2+  
21.Kxf2 Raxd8 22.Rfc1 Re7  
23.Rc3± ) 19.Kxh2 Qxd5 20.Nf6+ ]

18...Bxe5-+ 45 19.Qxd8 32 Rxd8 7  
20.dxe5 24 gxf4 9 21.exf4 4



Three pawns for the piece, and a huge  
kingside majority. So what: -3.32/29 on  
Stockfish. 21...Bg4?! 1:50

[ 21...Be6 ]

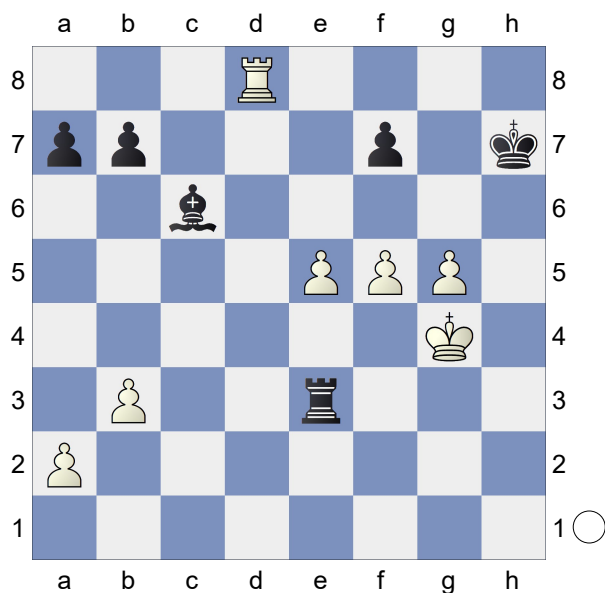
[ 21...h5 ]

22.f3 1:15 A very useful free move!  
(Mind you, I'm still lost) 22...Be6 8 23.g4  
1:33 I'll figure out what he did wrong later.  
He let me off the hook, and even let me  
set up what I call "the Holy Grail,"  
connected passed pawns. 23...Rd2 1:07  
24.Rf2 27 Rad8 12 25.f5 22 Bc4 1:41  
26.b3 36 Bb5 2:09 27.h4 1:29 Rxf2  
2:41 28.Kxf2 3:23 Rd2+ 6 29.Kg3 17  
Bc6 32 30.g5 3:21 Re2 6:29 31.Kf4  
2:22 hxg5+ 2:12 32.hxg5 3:10 Rf2 26  
33.Rd1 49 Rxf3+ 47 34.Kg4 9 Re3 34  
35.Rd8+ 1:58 Kh7 23

(Diagram)

36.g6+! 1:33 fxg6?! 6:14

[ 36...Kg7!? 37.gxf7 Kxf7 38.e6+  
Ke7 39.Rh8 Stockfish, in the time it  
took me to open this note window,  
has reduced this to "0.00" in every  
direction. My thought at the time was  
I would be lucky to get rook vs. rook



and bishop. ]

**37.f6 24 Re4+ 49**

[During the game I wondered about

37...Rf3 38.Rf8! Re3 ( 38...Bd5

39.e6! ) 39.Rd8!!= (the only move) ]

**38.Kg3 30 Re3+ 55 39.Kg4 43 Re4+**

**52 40.Kg3 7 Re3+ 1:31 41.Kg4 11**

Wow! Quite a story. I'll ask John

Donaldson about the Rubinstein stuff

and expand this into a book or

something.

1/2-1/2

## 2026 Cornerstone Chess Academy Launch

IM Josiah Stearman, a longtime friend of the club, is launching his own Chess Academy in the South Bay in 2026. To kick things off, they're holding a tournament and offering a discount to Mechanics' members. Sign up before December 11th and use the discount code MECHANICS15 to receive 15% off. More information about this organization and their tournament is in the flyer below.



# 2026 Cornerstone Chess Academy Launch

**\$13,500 Guaranteed Prizes**

**January 2-4, 2026**

Domain Hotel, 1085 E El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

5-round Swiss, 90+30, USCF & FIDE Rated  
(Top 4 sections FIDE Rated)

**2200+ (FIDE Rated):** \$1,500-\$1,000-\$500, u2300: \$400-\$250

**2000-2199 (FIDE Rated):** \$1,000-\$600-\$400, u2100: \$300

**1800-1999 (FIDE Rated):** \$800-\$550-\$350, u1900: \$250

**1600-1799 (FIDE Rated):** \$600-\$450-\$300, u1700: \$200

**1400-1599:** \$400-\$300-\$200, u1500: \$150

**1200-1399:** \$400-\$300-\$150, u1300: \$150

**u1200:** \$400-\$300-\$150, u1000: \$150

\$150 Entry fee, free for GM/IM/WGM, \$50 off for  
FM/WIM/WFM

\$100 Entry fee for non-FIDE Rated sections (u1600)

\$50 play-up, max 15 spots per section, live or published must  
be within 100 points of section minimum\*\*

\$15 late fee after 12/15, \$30 after 12/28, \$50 onsite up until  
two hours before the first round

Registration may close if capacity is reached

*Questions? Email: [jps.cornerstone.chess@gmail.com](mailto:jps.cornerstone.chess@gmail.com)*

## **Cornerstone Launch FIDE Blitz**

5 Double Rounds Swiss, 3+2, USCF &  
FIDE Blitz Rated

Sections based on the higher of USCF Blitz or  
Regular Rating

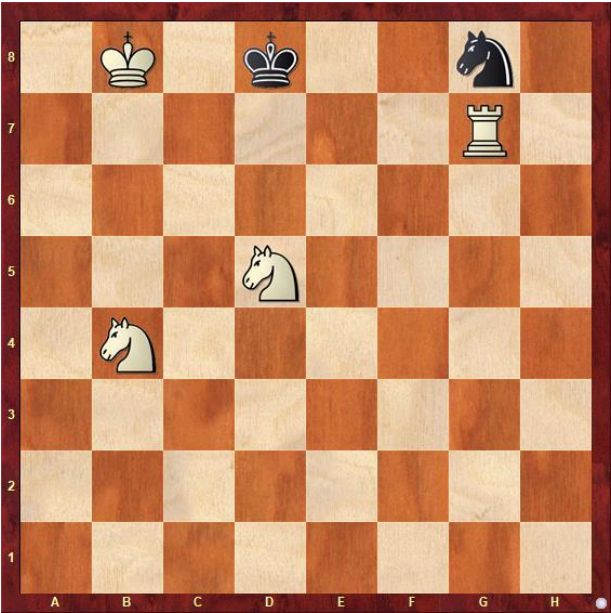
**Open:** \$400-250-150, u2200: \$50, u1800: \$50,  
u1400: \$50  
Largest Upset Prize: \$50

Sunday, January 4th; Starts  
8:30pm with rolling schedule



**Register  
Now!**

Tony's Teasers  
White to play and mate in 3.



## Solutions

For Tony's Teaser:

1. Re7, Nxe7 2. Nf6, Ng6, 3. Nc6#



## Contact Us

Mechanics' Institute Chess Club is on the 4th floor at 57 Post Street, San Francisco, CA.  
Our phone number is 415-393-0110.

We welcome any feedback, articles, or "Letter to the Editor" piece.  
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