Conway TNM Round Four Report

IM Elliott Winslow is in sole 1st place in the top section with 3.5 points after defeating Expert Edward Lewis. This apparently makes the score between the two a perfect 7-0 for Winslow, and he represents a major hurdle for the talented Lewis. But there’s always next time! Lewis is among six tied for 2nd with 3 – 1 scores.

Anton Maliev leads the under 1800 section with a perfect 4 – 0. He is closely trailed by Dominic Croce, Steve Sobel, and Yorgos Tsolias, all with 3.5 points.

The Conway TNM has two TD’s, with Dr. Judit Sztaray and former MI Chess Club Director Abel Talamantez alternating every other Tuesday.

Raymond (Ray) Conway was the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director from 1971 to 1980. His tenure coincided with the ‘Fischer Boom’, and the Tuesday Night Marathon was started by Conway to make the most of the soaring interest in chess at that time.

Former Chess Room Director IM John Donaldson rounds out the little we know about his predecessor in a previous MI Newsletter, here: https://www.milibrary.org/chess-newsletters/734

For complete TNM info, standings and results: https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/ ray-conway-memorial-tuesday-night-marathon
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3
Another completely unprepared opening choice at the board. 3...Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0

5.Nc3 d6
[The real reason I don't play the Fianchetto so often is 5...c6 6.Nf3 d5 -- boring!]

6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0-0 a6 8.h3
This is now more frequent than the old main line,
[8.d5 Na5 9.Nd2 c5]
[And would you believe that the highest-scoring move, by quite a bit, is 8.Bf4! so I'll be learning about *that* in the near future. And note, there have been over a thousand cases of it so it's no statistical fluke.]

8...h6!?
[8...Rb8]
[8...Bd7]

9.e4 e5 10.d5 Ne7 11.Be3?!  
[11.Ne1!]

11...Ne8
[11...Nd7]

12.Qd2 Kh7 13.Ne1 f5 14.Nd3 b6?! Somewhere along this line Black had ...b5 as a shot.
[14...Nf6 15.f3 Nh5 16.Ne2 c5
17.dxc6 bxc6 18.Rfd1 d5 19.cxd5 cxd5 20.exd5 Qxd5 21.g4 Nf6
22.Nc3 Qa5 23.b4 Qc7 24.Rac1 f4
33.Bxf8 Raxf8 34.Nd6 Rd7 35.Rb1 a5 36.a3 Rfd8 37.Nxb7 Rxd2
38.Nxd8 Nc2 39.Nc6 Nxa3
1-0 (39) Molina,R (2376)-De Carvalho, L Belo Horizonte 2010]

18.Rae1 a5 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.g4 Nfd6

21.b3 White's positional (i.e. not material) edge is fatal and everything Black wants to avoid in the King's Indian: weak pawns (e5, c7, g6), monster square (e4), loose king, bad bishops, even behind in development.

21...Nxe4 22.Bxe4+- Nd6?!
[22...Bd7 23.Bg2 e4]

My mind was moving slow. 23.Bg3
25.Qd3+ Kg7 26.Rxe5

1-0 (39) Molina,R (2376)-De Carvalho, L Belo Horizonte 2010]

18.Rae1 a5 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.g4 Nfd6

White is down a piece. Black is very
lost. Qf6 27.Re7+!! Qxe7 28.Bd4+ Rf6 29.Rxf6 Qxf6 30.Bxf6+ Kxf6 31.Qd4+ Kg6 32.Qh8 Black got a lot for the queen (although "on paper" material is even), but if/when the h- or c-pawn goes it's Promotion Time. [Or 23.Nxe5 Bxe5 24.Bxg6+ Kxg6 25.Qd3+ when none of the blocks work either. ]


26...Re8?! [26...Nxe5 27.Qxe4 Qa3!? 28.Nxe5 Qxb3 29.Kg2! Bxe5 30.Qxe5 Rf8 31.Qd4!!+-]

27.Kg2 I thought after a few moves that this was horrible, but it's okay, just not best. [27.Nxe5! he can just never take advantage of any pins. ]

27...Bb7 [27...Bc8! keeps my rook off e6 in the big combo line, although White is still +- there. ]

28.h4?! [28.Nxe5! Bxe5 29.Bxe5 Qxe5 30.Bxg6+ Kxg6 31.Qxe5 Rxe5 32.Rxe5+- I should be seeing this clearly -- perhaps the cough medicine... ]

28...Qd7?
[28...Nxe4 29.Qxe4
A) 29...Qd6
A1) 30.h5 c6! A1a) 31.Nxe5! cxd5
A1a1) 32.Qxg6+? Qxg6 33.hxg6+ Kg8 34.Kh3= I was looking for some won ending, which is all wrong.
Bxe5 (34...Re7; 34...dxc4);
A1a2) 32.hxg6+!;
A1b) 31.Qxg6+ Qxg6 32.hxg6+ Kxg6 33.d6! Bc8 34.Kf3! c5 35.Bxe5!;
A1c) 31.Nf4!;
A2) 30.Bxe5+;-
A3) 30.Nxe5!+-;
B) 29...c6!!

(B) 29...c6!!
Bd7+ 38.Kf4 Bf5 39.Re3±;
B2) 30.Nf4+- but not by the margins seen in other lines]

29.h5 Nxe4
[29...Kg8!? 30.Bxg6]
30.Qxe4 c6?!  
[30...Re6?! tries to obfuscate (un成功ively).]
31.Nxe5
[31.Qxg6+ Kg8 (31...Kh8 32.Nxe5) 32.Nxe5 Stockfish is seeing mate in 11 even if I'm not.]
31...Bxe5
[31...Qd6 is the only move to avoid impending checkmate.

A) 32.Qxg6+ Qxg6 33.hxg6+ Kg8 34.Nxc6 (34.dxc6 Ba8 35.Kh3) 34...Rxe1 35.Bxe1;  
B) 32.hxg6+ Kg8 33.Qf5! Rf8 34.Nxc6!]
32.Qxg6+ Kh8 33.Bxe5+ 1-0

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Be7 has held up in a couple games.]

10...Na5
[10...0-0-0 was played by the opening pioneer Eric Prie, but his opponent was a mere 1700 player so it doesn't seem appropriate to quote the game (0-1 29). 11.Kh1 Nb4 12.a3 Nbd5 13.Bf2 h5]
11.Bb3 Nxb3 12.axb3 c5N
[12...Be7 13.Nf4 0-0 14.Re1 when the Indian former world champion outplayed the leading Dutch grandmaster at the time. 1-0 (37) Anand,V (2772)-Van Wely,L (2679) Wijk aan Zee 2013.]

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1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5
7...Qb6! 8.Nge2 e6 9.Be3!  
[9.Bb3 was the move order of Anand-van Wely, below.]
9...Nc6! 10.0-0  
[10.a3?! Ne7!? 11.0-0 Ned5 12.Bf2

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B01

Weng,Nicholas 2021
Bambou,Christophe 2101
MI Conway TNM: 1800+ (4.2) 24.05.2022
[Winslow, Elliott C]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 c5 5.Bg2 Nc6 6.0-0 cxd4 7.Nxd4

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E01

Walder,Michael 2075
Dessert,Christopher 1703
MI Conway TNM: 1800+ (4.7) 24.05.2022
[Winslow, Elliott C]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 c5 5.Bg2 Nc6 6.0-0 cxd4 7.Nxd4

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Diagram

e5? Transposing into a Grunfeld down *two* moves? Too much!  
[Better is 7...Bc5 8.Nb3 Bb6+ although White can still press this Tarrasch position. Here's a recent high-level blitz game: 9.cxd5 exd5 10.Nc3 d4 11.Na4 0-0 12.Bg5 (There has been a flurry of excitement ("The Tarrasch is back!")) thanks to this game and others: 12.Re1 Re8 13.Bg5 h6 14.Bxf6

[13.Bxd5 is the computer preference. At least then you don't have to have paranoid dreams about the opposite colored bishops.]
13...Bxd5?!
[13...Rc8 14.Qa4+ Qd7 15.Qxd7+ Bxd7 16.Rfc1]

14.Bxd5

Rc8N
[Time for the irrelevant predecessor:
15.Qa4+ Qd7

(Diagram)

Ke7 27.b3 Ke8 28.Rd5 Ke7 29.Kg2 Kf7 30.Kf3 Ke7 31.Kg4 Ke8 32.Kh5 Kf7 33.h4 Ke7 34.g4 Kf7 35.g5 hxg5 36.hxg5 Be7 37.Rxe5 Rc5 Black forces off the rooks but it's too late. 38.Bg6+ Kf8 39.Rxc5 Bxc5 40.Kg4 Ke7 41.Kf5 Bb4 42.f4 a5 43.Bh5 Bc3 44.Be2 Bd2 45.e4 Kd6 46.Bc4 Bc1 47.e5+ Ke7 48.Kf4 Bd2 49.a3 Kd7 50.g6 Ke7 51.f5 Bc3 52.f6+ Kf8 53.Kf5 Bd4 54.b4 axb4 55.axb4 Bc3 56.b5 Bd4 57.Bd5 Bb6 58.e6 Bc5 59.e7+ Ke8 60.Bc6# 1-0

Ke7 27.b3 Ke8 28.Rd5 Ke7 29.Kg2 Kf7 30.Kf3 Ke7 31.Kg4 Ke8 32.Kh5 Kf7 33.h4 Ke7 34.g4 Kf7 35.g5 hxg5 36.hxg5 Be7 37.Rxe5 Rc5 Black forces off the rooks but it's too late. 38.Bg6+ Kf8 39.Rxc5 Bxc5 40.Kg4 Ke7 41.Kf5 Bb4 42.f4 a5 43.Bh5 Bc3 44.Be2 Bd2 45.e4 Kd6 46.Bc4 Bc1 47.e5+ Ke7 48.Kf4 Bd2 49.a3 Kd7 50.g6 Ke7 51.f5 Bc3 52.f6+ Kf8 53.Kf5 Bd4 54.b4 axb4 55.axb4 Bc3 56.b5 Bd4 57.Bd5 Bb6 58.e6 Bc5 59.e7+ Ke8 60.Bc6# 1-0

33.Nf3?? [33.h4 Ne5 34.Qc2 Ne4 35.f3 Stockfish 14.1 gives White an advantage that flickers between insignificant and significant. I suspect if I let it run enough it will find some shot for Black; as it went, White beat us to the punch: ]
33...Nxf3 34.Kxf3 Ne5+ 0-1

XIIIIIIIIY

33.Nf3?? [33.h4 Ne5 34.Qc2 Ne4 35.f3 Stockfish 14.1 gives White an advantage that flickers between insignificant and significant. I suspect if I let it run enough it will find some shot for Black; as it went, White beat us to the punch: ]
33...Nxf3 34.Kxf3 Ne5+ 0-1

The "Marshall Defence" to the Queen's Gambit. Not his finest product. 3.e3 [3.cxd5! Make Black pay for not protecting his center better! ]
3...c5 4.Nc3 g6 5.Nf3 Bg7


D00

Carron, Joel 1686
Riese, Kayven 1900
MI Conway TNM: 1800+ (4.9) 24.05.2022
[Winslow, Elliott C]
So now we’ve settled into the Grunfeld Defense, with e2-e3 for White. 6.b3?

[ 6.dxc5! is still looking pretty good for White! ]
6...Nc6 7.Ba3? There was still time to reduce the damage:

[ 7.Bb2 ]
[ 7.Be2 ]
7...0-0?

[ 7...Qa5!+ 8.Bb2 ( 8.Qc1 Ne4 9.cxd5 cxd4! 10.dxc6 dxe3! ) 8...Bg4 (or 8...Ne4 ) 9.Be2 Ne4 10.Rc1 Bxf3

11.gxf3 cxd4 - you can’t waste time like this in the opening! ]
8.Bxc5

Re8?

9.Nxd5?

9...Nxd5?  

10.cxd5 Qxd5 11.Bc4 Qh5 12.0-0+=

10...Bxh3? 14.gxh3 Qxh3 15.Bxf7+ which is hardly necessary]

13...e5?! 13...e5!±  
[ 13...e5!± ]

14.Ba3  
[ 14.Rc1!? ]

14...Qh4  
[ 20...Qf6 21.Rc1 (21.fxe3 Qxa1) 22...e2 22.Bxe2 Rad8 ]

21.f4??  
[ 21.fxe3 Qxe3+ 22.Bf2 Qe7 23.Re1 Ne5!± ]

21...Qc5 22.Qe2 Bxa1+= 23.Rxa1 Rad8  
[ 23...Nd4 ]

24.Nf3 Nd4  

25.Nxd4 Rxd4 26.Be1 Rxf4
Sometimes the two bishops can perform miracles. Here it's the Black majors that weave spells around White's king.  

27.b4 Qg5  28.Bg3 Rxg4  29.Kf1 Rxg3  
35.Kb2 Qd2+  
0-1
1.Nf3  b5 Albert loves to play this move with the White pieces. He decides to try it for the defense too. 2.e4  b4  3.d4 Bb7  4.Bd3

One must admit White has a very nice opening with all the control of the center.

4...e6  5.a3  a5  6.axb4  axb4  7.Rxa8 Bxa8  8.0-0  c5  9.Re1

[9.c3 or ]

[9.Be3 are to be considered. Both maintain a nice opening edge. ]

9...h6  10.d5  Nf6  11.dxe6?!

[Now Albert gets the type of game he was looking for. 11.Nbd2 or ]

[11.c4 keep the advantage ]

[16...Nd5 is a good central square for the knight ]

17.Qd2  Rd8  18.Qe2  Ndf8  19.c3  Ng5  20.Nxg5  Bxg5  21.cxb4  cxb4  22.Bc1

[22.Nd6?!]

22...Bxc1  23.Rxc1  Qb8  24.Be4

[Again 24.Nd6 is more aggressive Nd7 25.Qh5 Rf8 is a little passive for Black]

24...Bd5  25.Bxd5  Rxd5  26.Rd1?!  Qb5!

White is objectively still ok, but this move starts to put the pressure on.

[14...Bxe4! 15.Bxe4  Qxd1  16.Rxd1 Nxe4 wins a pawn ]

15.Bb2  Qc7  16.e5  Nh7
oawn would recapture and win the pinned knight on c3. Meanwhile the e5 pawn is coming under attack and must be watched. 27.Qc2?! Danny gets nervous and wants to step out of the pin immediately.

[ 27.g3 Nd7 28.Rxd5! exd5 29.e6! dxc4 30.exd7 Qxd7 31.Qxc4 would keep equality. ]

27...Ng6 now Black wins the e-pawn
28.Nd6?! Rxd1+ 29.Qxd1 Qxe5

With an extra pawn and better position Albert has all the momentum. 30.Nc4 Qd5 Now White should trade queens and play a knight ending a pawn down. This is suffering of course. Instead Danny blunders to end it quickly.

31.g3??
0-1

It is a welcome sight to see Conrado Diaz back playing the TNM. Another master to challenge for first place. Of course it makes a challenging pairing for Guy Argo. 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.Nge2 Less usual than 5. Nf3 or 5. d4 but avoiding the pin from the light-squared bishop. 5...e6 6.0-0 Be7 7.d3 0-0 8.Bd2! A nice little move that gains a slight edge in the opening. 8...c5

(Diagram)

9.Ng3 but this is slow
[ 9.Nd5! Qd8 10.Nxe7+ Qxe7 11.Re1 gains the bishop pair and keeps the edge ]

9...Qd8 10.f4 g6 11.Nce4 Nc6 12.Bc3

offering an exchange sacrifice for a pawn and the loosening of the black
Conrado accepts the challenge and grabs the material. His judgement is accurate. 24.Ng5 Bxg5

25.Qxe6+ Rf7

[25...Kh8 26.fxg5 Re8 27.Qf7 Bd5 28.Qf6+ Qxf6 29.gxf6 Bxf3 30.gxf3 Re2 31.Bf4 Kg8 is also very strong. Black should win the endgame.] 26.fxg5 Bxf3 27.gxf3

[27.Rxf3 may be a little better. In any case the black rooks have the important e-file to use and the white bishops are constrained.]

27...Rc6 28.Qe2 Re7 29.Qg2?! [29.Qd1]

29...Rce6 30.Qg3 Re2 The invasion has come. 31.Rd1?! [31.Bc1]

31...Qd5 32.Kg1 Qc6

White resigned as he has no active play and Black is just chopping off more material. 0-1

Both sides have developed pieces to good squares and are ready for action. Christopher makes a sensible decision to push the d-pawn and make exchanges. 13.d5 exd5 14.Nxd5 Nxd5 15.Bxd5 Qb6 16.Qe2 Bd6 17.b4?! This leads to some trouble. [17.Rfe1 Qxb2 18.Qxb2 Bxb2 19.Rb1 Bxa3 20.Rxb7 gives White active play for the pawn. Chances would be even.]

17...Nd4 18.Qa2 Nxf3+ 19.Bxf3 Rac8 20.gxf3 So Black has an edge due to the doubled white f pawns. Nothing too much yet, but a long term issue. 21.Rfd1 Bd4 22.Re1?!

[22.Rxc8 Rxc8 23.Qd2 is more active]

22...Qf6 23.Rxc8 Rxc8 24.Qe2 h6
25.\textit{Qe4 b5! 26.Be3 Bxe3}  
[26...Bb2! wins the a-pawn]

\textbf{27.Rxe3 Rc1+ 28.Kg2 Rc4 29.Qe5 Qg6+ 30.Qg3 Qc6} Best play should probably lead to a draw, but Black has a nagging edge and White must be careful.

\textbf{31.h3}  
[31.Qe5!]

\textbf{31...Rc1 32.Rd3 Re1 33.Qg4 Re6!} switching back for defense also creates play on the g-file

\textbf{34.Kh2 Qc1 35.Qg1}  

\textbf{Re1 36.Qg2 Rf1} Nice play - like Capablanca. White is getting tied down to weaknesses and king defense.

\textbf{37.Re3?}  

(Diagram)

White should have played 37. Rd2! to hold the f2 pawn. Now it's finished.

\textbf{37...Qc7+! 38.f4}  
[38.Qg3 Rfx2+]

\textbf{38...Qxf4+ 39.Rg3?!}  
[39.Qg3 Rfx2+ 40.Kg1 Qxg3+ 41.Rxg3 Ra2 is an easily won rook ending with two extra pawns and the white king stuck on the back rank]

\textbf{39...Rxf2}  

0-1
18.Kh2! The black pawns on the kingside are in danger and the white bishop on g5 is not in danger anymore.

[ 18.Nxg7? Rg8 ]
18...Rh7 19.Rg1 c5?!
[ 19...Bc5 ]
20.Rg4 Rf8?
[ 20...Rf7 ]

White wins at least the piece back 22...Rg7
[ 22...Rhg8 23.Bxg7 Rg7 24.Rdg1 ]
23.Rxg6 Rh7 24.Rdg1
White is simply winning the endgame with the extra pawn, control of the g-file and the target on h4. 24...Kd7 25.Rg7+ Rf7 26.Rxf7+ Rxf7 27.Bxh4

Well played by Dutter. Opening up the center allows the rook into the game and undermines support of the f4 pawn. 36...cxd4 37.cxd4 exd4 38.Kxf4 c5

39.Kg4 Rh8 40.f4 Bf6 41.e5 Bxg5 42.fxg5 Rd8 43.f4 d3 44.h5+ Kf7 45.Kf5 c4 46.g6+ Kg7 47.Kg5 b5 48.h6+ Kg8 49.h7+ Kg7 50.f5 d2 51.f6+

Four monster pawns. 51...Kh8 52.g7+ Kxh7 53.Rh1+ Kg8 54.Rh8+ 1-0
GM Nick de Firmian

Players from India Dominating the Chess World

Indian chess players, both young and old, are dominating right now. Former World Champion Vishy Anand showed age-defying form and won the rapid tournament in the Warsaw stage of the Grand Chess Tour. Here he beat top ten players Aronian, So, Rapport, and Duda. An amazing performance for a 52-year-old player who has hardly competed in the last two years. He was just edged out of first place in the combined rapid and blitz by Duda when he lost a five-minute game to the local hero, but the result was incredible. No other player over 50 years of age is in the top ranked 2700+ club and there is only one player in his 40’s on that list (Topalov).

Another Indian player, 16-year-old Ramesh Praggnanandhaa is making waves and breaking into the world’s elite. He defeated World Champion Magnus Carlsen for the second time this week with a victory in the Meltwater Chess Tour. Then he progressed into the knockout stage of that event, defeating former prodigy Wei Yi in the quarter finals, then defeating world number 9 Anish Giri in the semifinals and battled world #2, Ding Liren in the finals. He barely lost that match 2.5-1.5, and soon he may be a regular in tournament finals.

The most significant Indian chess event coming soon is the 44th Chess Olympiad, which will be held in Chennai (formerly Madras) from July 28 to August 10th. This most important event of the chess world (along with the world championship) has been moved to India after the planned event in Moscow was cancelled due to the Ukraine war. Thus India, the place where chess began 15 centuries ago, has come again to the fore of the chess world.
An interesting opening choice from Anand. He trades the bishop for knight without provocation, seeming to be comfortable with the pawn structure that arises. White has no advantage, but it's a position Anand likes to play.

5...dxc6 6.Nc3 Qe7 7.h3 a5 8.Be3 Bxe3 9.fxe3 a4 10.a3 0-0 11.0-0 Ne8 12.Qe1 Nd6

13.g4!? Pressing ahead on the kingside to try to gain space there. 13...f6 14.Qg3 g5 15.Rf2 Be6 16.Raf1 b5 17.Ne2 Still the game is equal and rather blocked on the kingside. Anand begins knight maneuvers. 17...Rf7 18.h4 h6 19.Nh2 c5 20.Qh3! Making way for the other knight to come into the kingside battle. 20...Raf8 21.Ng3 c4 22.Nf5 This seems premature and Black is quite fine now. White could keep more options with 22. Nf3 instead of trading on the f5 square right away. 22...Bxf5

34.Nxf6! Anand seizes the moment for the breakthrough. The black king can’t quite reach shelter after the knight sacrifice. 34...Rxf6 35.Qh5+ Kg7 [35...Qh7 36.Rd8+ Kg7 37.Rd7+] 36.Qxg5+ Kf7 37.Rd8 Nd6 38.Rh8! There is no defense now. 38...Qxe4 [38...Ke7 39.Rh6 Nxe4 40.Qg7+ Rf7 41.Re6+ Kd8 42.Qg8+ mops up] 39.Qg8+ Ke7 40.Qd8+ Duda resigned.
I must say I like Pragg's aggressive style. He seems to like to attack, just like his hero Anand. 11...e6 12.h5 Qh4 13.Qc1!? a sharp pawn sacrifice  
[13.hxg6 hxg6 14.f3 is safer]

20.d5 Throwing a second pawn sacrifice into the attack. It may not be completely sound but it is certainly difficult to deal with. 20...exd5 21.Bd4 Rad8 
22.Bxh8 Kxh8

23.Nxd5! Bxd5 24.Qd2 Qe7 25.Qc3+ f6 26.Rxd5 Rc8 27.Re1! Qc7 28.Qa3 Nc4 29.Qe7 Ne5? Giri had defended well and would have an equal position after

[29...Rf7 30.Qe8+ Rf8]
30.Rxe5! The winning shot! 30...fxe5 31.Rd7 Qc1+ 32.Bd1 Qxh6 33.Qxe5+
Black resigned. I’m sure we are going to get a lot of great games from young Pragg in the next decade.

1-0
International Master Jeremy Silman, who celebrates his 68th birthday this summer, is well-known as one of the best and most successful authors in the history of American chess. His classic work *Reassess Your Chess* has gone through four editions and sold over 100,000 copies. The latter figure is especially noteworthy as the few other books that have enjoyed this degree of success have invariably been aimed at beginners. Silman’s intended audience - club players in the 1400 to 2200 range – are nowhere near as numerous.

My personal favorite among the many books Silman has written is the one devoted to Pal Benko. This was a collaboration with the late Hungarian-American Grandmaster but it was Silman who did most of the work and was responsible for making the book so special. It has everything one could want as dozens of well-annotated games are interspersed between stories of Benko’s life, told in Silman’s entertaining style. Add in John Watson’s survey of Benko’s contributions to opening theory, sections on his endgame studies and problems and dozens of great photos and you have a wonderful book that deserves a place in every chessplayers’ library. It doesn’t hurt that it is also quite attractive - a handsome hardcover work with dust jacket beautifully laid out by Silman’s wife and publisher, Gwen Feldman.

The two have teamed up together once again with *Silman’s Chess Odyssey* (Siles Press 2022, 550 pages, $35.95, https://www.silmanjamespress.com/shop/chess/silmans-chess-odyssey/). This is a unique book and the closest Jeremy has come to writing a work about his best efforts, but it is much more than a standard game collection. Much of it is devoted to his examination of the best players in history going all the way back to Greco in the 16th century. Silman makes his own judgements on these giants and his assessments sometimes differ considerably from conventional wisdom making this both an instructive and fun book to read and one which I can warmly recommend.

These days Silman is primarily known as a writer and lecturer, talents that were combined in his work for The Great Courses series, but back in the day he was also a strong player with first place finishes in the US Open, National Open, American Open, and Northern and Southern California Championships to his credit.

Jeremy Silman grew up in San Diego and started playing in the late 1960s. By today’s standards Jeremy was hardly a prodigy - he was the 20th rated junior in the country at 2175 on the April 1974 USCF rating list. His fortunes would change when he moved from Southern California to San Francisco later that year.
That fall, a few months after his 21st birthday, he finally became a USCF Master, but this would not be the limit of his forward progress. During the next decade, spent primarily in the Bay Area with short stays in England and Chicago, Silman steadily advanced, reaching 2556 on the July 1982 USCF rating list and was clearly International Master strength. However, he would not receive the title until 1987 as opportunities to make norms were limited in the US, particularly on the West Coast.

Jeremy Silman (with moustache) watches Jay Whitehead (wearing a visor), Robert Hammie and Water Browne (sunglasses and hat) at Paul Masson. The hat and visor were worn because the tournament, which ran through much of the 1970s into the early 1980s, was played outdoors in a vineyard.

Silman reached his peak as a player in the late 1980s and early 1990s while living in Los Angeles. It was there he attained his peak rating of 2593 USCF in May 1990 and achieved his greatest competitive result, a 3 ½ - ½ match victory over Jack Peters (then 2505 FIDE), one of the strongest International Masters in the history of American chess.

Unfortunately, you will not find the games of this match in MegaData Base. Like many of Silman’s best efforts, often played in American Swisses without bulletins, they have not been included which is a real pity. Fortunately, Jeremy did save a number of his best efforts which he sent me. I hope to share the best with readers of the *MI Newsletter*. Consider this the first installment.
In the summer of 1985, footloose and fancy-free, I decided to take off for Europe for a month or so to visit some old friends.

On the way over I stopped in New York City to visit my good friend David and found out he was playing in a chess tournament – the fabled New York Open.

Why not? I thought and threw my hat in the ring.

I got off to a good start by defeating fellow Californian Thomas Maser in round one: [https://www.milibrary.org/chess-newsletters/893#whitehead](https://www.milibrary.org/chess-newsletters/893#whitehead). A nice effort vs. Danny Edelman from the last round is in the same Newsletter.

And then in round two I crushed my old rival John Fedorowicz - maybe the best game I have ever played: [https://www.milibrary.org/chess-newsletters/867](https://www.milibrary.org/chess-newsletters/867)

I was 2-0, and on a roll.

David lived in Queens, so we took the subway into Manhattan for the tournament. I was having a blast: it was Summer, we were hanging out with the delightful Pia Cramling, the Pretenders and the Cars were on the radio - we were wild children in the City.

But what about the chess?

Was I going to win this thing?

The answer came soon enough. In round three I was paired with the fearsome Lev Alburt, the U.S. Champion at the time. As usual I was ready for a fight, but my opponent’s experience and resiliency won out in the end.

An opportunity for redemption came in round four when I was matched up with the legendary Eugenio Torre, Philippine ace and friend of Bobby Fischer.

Again, I came out swinging, but yet again I was out-boxed.

Despite these two losses (bringing me back to an even score) I finished with a respectable 4.5 - 3.5 - plus wonderful memories of friendship and good times...

My shortcomings as a player were, as ever, glaringly apparent - even to myself - non-existent opening preparation and overly aggressive play when I should have kept a clear head. Worst of all, from the competitive aspect: lack of chess ambition.

But here, see for yourself:
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nc3 Nbd7
There's nothing wrong with this 'Old-Indian' move, but it's completely out of fashion. 4.e4 e5 5.Nf3 g6 6.Bg5
Provoking black's next move. White can also try:
[ 6.Be2 ]
[ 6.d5 ]
6...h6 7.Be3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.dxe5
An interesting approach. I've had both John Grefe and William Lombardy choose this pawn structure against me. Of course there's nothing wrong with this from black's point of view. 9...dxe5

10.Nd2 Nh7
[ 10...Nb8! intending ...Nc6 and ...Nd4 is an excellent alternative. ]
11.c5 Ng5 12.Bc4 Nf6 13.f3 c6
14.Nb3 Qe7 15.Qc1 Alburt goes his own way.
[ 15.Qd6 Qxd6 16.cxd6 Rd8 17.0-0-0 b6 18.Rd2 was a sharp alternative. ]
15...Nh5 Black is attack-oriented.

16.0-0 Kh7 17.Rd1 One of the secrets of strong players is that they like giving you the rope to hang yourself with. Black now sacrifices a pawn. 17...Nf4!? [ 17...Be6∞ ]
[ 17...f5∞ ]

18.Bxf4 Principled. 18...exf4 19.Qxf4 Be5 Black's play on the dark squares gives no more than an uneasy equality. 20.Qe3 Qc7 21.Kh1!
[ 21.g3 Bxg3 22.hxg3 Qxg3+ 23.Kf1 Nxf3 ]
is just the kind of action black is looking for.

21...Bxh2?! Too eager to regain his pawn, but now the initiative passes to white. Instead

[ 21...b5! 22.cxb6 axb6 frees up black's position and maintains a dynamic balance. ]

22.Ne2! Threatens to trap the bishop with 23.f4. 22...Ne6

[ 22...Be6 was more tenacious. ]

23.Bxe6!

Played without prejudice. The 2 bishops are meaningless here. 23...fxe6 24.Nd2 b6 25.Nc4! Ba6 Again sacrificing a pawn, but either

[ 25...Rb8 ]

[ 25...bxc5 were a tougher defense. ]


(Diagram)

Another accurate and powerful move.

28...Bxe2 Black goes out in a blaze of something.

[ 28...Rxd7 29.Rxd7+ Qxd7 30.Kxh2+ is no better. ]

29.Nxf8+ Rxf8 30.Qxe2 Bg3 31.Qe3! Taking some dark squares. 31...Qe7 32.Kg1 Qh4 33.Rd7+ Kg8 34.Kf1

Blacks next to last hope: maybe in time-trouble the U.S. Champion will overlook ...

...Rxf3+? 36.Rd3 No way. 36...Qb5 Still full of tricks. 37.Qd4! A powerful centralization. 37...c5 38.a4 Qa6 39.Qe3 c4 40.Rc3 Be5 41.Qxh6! Returning the exchange: it's all over. 41...Bxc3 42.bxc3 e5 43.Rd1 Qc6 44.a5

(Diagram)

1-0
c6 Solid. I was kind of fishing for

[ 5...Nc6 6.e5!? Nxd4 7.exf6 Nxe2
Rg8 11.0-0-0

A clumsy pawn sacrifice. 10...Qxd4
11.Nf3 Qd6 12.0-0-0 Nd5 13.Rhe1 e6
14.Ne4 Qc7 15.c4 I thought I was
A really nice tactic. 16.cxb5 Black is a pawn ahead and winning after
[16.cxd5 cxd5+ 17.Kb1 (17.Nc3 b4+-) 17...dxe4+]
16...a5! Another beautiful move. White is rocked back on his heels. 17.a3 cxb5+
18.Kb1 b4 19.Rc1 Ba6!

23.Nc5 Na6! Black's moves are a model of precision, and white is left without a chance to recover. 24.Nxa6 Bxa6
25.Ne5 Rfc8! 26.Rxc8+ Rxc8 27.axb4

28.Bc3 axb4 29.Bxb4 h5! Avoiding white's cheapo:
with a drawn position.
30.g4 hxg4 31.Nxg4 Be2! 32.Ne3 Rxb2+ 33.Ka3 Bf3 34.Nd1 Bxd1
35.Rxd1 Rxf2 I never knew what hit me! 0-1

Monday’s Chess Café was active on many fronts. We participated in going over several games as well as stories from the recent history of chess. The first game was Botvinnik-Smyslov, Game 2 of the 1958 return match for the World Championship, which was the third match in a row between the same opponents, which started with a tie in 1954 (Botvinnik kept the title, based on a rule he got installed after winning the 1948 tournament to succeed the late Alekhine), a win by Smyslov in 1957 after he won his second Candidates Tournament in a row, then a win by Botvinnik in the return match granted him a year later. In fact the latter won the first three games in ‘58 and we saw why. “Black’s set-up is called the Panno,” noted Paul Whitehead.

“Smyslov seemed to play without a plan,” said Urban Lehner, Zooming in from D.C.

“It was 16... Nb6?! [instead of . . . Re8] where he started to go wrong,” noted Mike Walder.

We then looked at the latter’s game as Black against Edward Lewis in Round 3 of the Tuesday Night Marathon. “Kind of a King’s Indian Defense or King’s Indian Reversed,” noted Walder. “I do well against this.” He pointed out . . . d6 with the aim of . . . Nd7 and . . . e5. Mentioned an early choice with the observation, “I’d rather play a Tarrasch Defense Reversed a tempo down. I like the Reti variation of the Tarrasch for White.”

When White played 8. c5, the choice of cxd5 was discussed. “Maybe c5 is a great move,” said Paul. White’s next move, 9 h3, Walder said, “The computer loved it. Black really wants to play . . . Bg4... Christophe Bambou and a master in the tournament thought I was going to play . . . Bxh3, but that doesn’t work.” Elliott Winslow noted that the move is routinely ignored.

After the loss, it was pointed out that Elliott would be Lewis’s next opponent. The latter has said Elliott is the only guy in the tournament that he only has losses against, the score being 6-0 for E.W., who noted in his high-spirited way, “It wasn’t my fault.” In fact Elliott did beat him again the day after the Café met.

We followed Lewis-Walder with Sherwood-Walder, which had a different result than the former. Paul noted, “There’s nothing like a good old-fashioned slaughter.” Added Mike, “Especially after losing.”

We moved on to a puzzle from Gadir Guseinov. Mike said that G.G. and Bacrot look to many sources for puzzles that are hard for them, then share them with each other and their students. Last week Alexey Root was first to find the winning move, a skewer
of the opposition’s queen with a horizontal check. Today’s problem was found in a magazine published in the 1920s.

Paul noted that John Donaldson once gave him Jon Speelman’s puzzle book. Mike said, “My rating went up 200 points when I went through a volume of Domination and Endgame Studies.”

As we struggled with this one, the comments came fast and free.

“Now we’re onto something,” said Paul.

“Or on something,” joked Elliott. Then, “So close and yet, so what?”

Eventually the Black queen was put in jail by pawn, bishop, and rook after it took the Ra8. Paul: “That’s a beautiful problem.” Elliott: “And real.”

My comments last week on the upcoming U.S. Senior were corrected. The tournament is a ten-player invitational, the winner of which plays in the World Senior, which, Mike noted, makes you a grandmaster. The 36 entrants in the Irwin tournament (which occurs during the U.S. Open) produces one of the qualifiers from California. We learned that Nick de Firmian is now going to play. Apparently Larry Christiansen, who tied for first last year, talked him into it. We looked at a list of the top U.S. players over 50.

After the recent passing of Yuri Averbakh at age 100, Alexander Matanovich at 92 is the oldest current GM. He was the founder and editor of Chess Informant.

The Candidates tournament will occur in about a month. Some really exciting players this time, including Hikaru Nakamura, 34, who recently won a World Championship qualifier. He is one of the most popular chess streamers. “He’s finding quirky ideas,” said Paul. “I’m definitely rooting for him.”

Young chess streamers like Nakamura and the Botez sisters (who are not high-level competitors) are taking chess to a much wider audience than normal.

Mike: “I watch Kamsky sometimes, too, and Izoria.”

Paul: “They all upload their stuff to YouTube. A group in L.A. plays chess on the beach. Chess has become entertainment.”

In regard to a software question, Trisha Gorman noted that she was once a technology journalist, and mentioned the term “feature compliant,” because sometimes you can put in too many features.
Alexey pointed out some of the different forms the U.S. Senior tournament might take, and that Chess.com will have all the boards. And how once Maxim Dlugy said he was hoping to hang out with people, but they all went back to their hotels to prepare.

She said in her younger days her dream was to play in the U.S. Junior Invitational, one of which was organized by the Mechanics’ at the Palace Hotel in 1973, and that she did play twice.

There was another story about Craig Chellstorp at the May 9 café. He was one of just 8 players in the 1972 U.S. Jr. Invitational, a Midwesterner among various New Yorkers. The TD, Isaac Kashdan, thought to tell him beforehand, “You don’t have a chance, you know.” Chellstorp was ticked off and rolled over the field. Kashdan had once directed another top U.S. tournament, where in the game Denker-Reshevsky, time ran out for one, but Kashdan turned the clock around and at first forfeited the wrong player. He was one of the strongest players in the early 1930s. “As long as he had the two bishops,” Sal Matera quipped.

In Part 2 of Bobby Fischer and His World, John Donaldson quotes Bent Larsen on a Caro-Kann he played against Fischer at Zurich 1959: “In the endgame I had good defensive opportunities, exchanging off all the pawns on the queenside. In a position with two bishops versus two knights and both sides having three kingside pawns, I offered a draw, but Fischer wanted to play on. Consequently we played almost another forty moves, and only when Bobby was threatened with the loss of a bishop was peace agreed upon. . .

“In this phase, Fischer overrates the power of the bishop pair; this appears to be an American tradition since the time of Fine and Kashdan.”

I’ll just note here that I was really ready for my 4th round game last Tuesday, but I went against some of the basic principles of play. I’ve been reading silently and out loud and trying to impose my will and my preparation on the position instead of being flexible and just playing. In fact, I rejected the good advance of my queen pawn two squares on the third move in both games I’ve lost, once as White and once as Black.

I’ll give Paul the last word, from May 23: “Chess requires that you make the effort. You do the best you can with the tools you have.”

(More on the Chess Café here: https://www.milibRARY.org/chess/chess-cafe)
New Chess Books at the MI

One of the benefits of membership at the Mechanics’ Institute is total access to one of the largest chess libraries in the country, with more than 3,000 books and periodicals. New titles are added frequently, in consultation with MI Chess Coordinator FM Paul Whitehead and former Chess Room Director IM John Donaldson. New chess books are displayed on the ‘non-fiction’ tables before shelving.

Upcoming Events

Ray Conway Memorial Tuesday Night Marathon - Ongoing
Tuesday, May 3rd 2022 - Tuesday, June 14th 2022. 6:30PM.
USCF + FIDE Rated. 7 Round SS G/120;d5
Information: [https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/ray-conway-memorial-tuesday-night-marathon](https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/ray-conway-memorial-tuesday-night-marathon)

May USCF Online-Rated Scholastic Tournaments via ChessKid.com
Monday May 30, 3PM. 6 games of G/10+2

57th Arthur Stamer Memorial G/40
Saturday June 4, 2022, 10AM. USCF Rated. 4 Games of G/40;d5
Two sections: 1800+ and under 1800.
Information: [https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/57th-stamer-memorial-championship](https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/57th-stamer-memorial-championship)
Registration: [https://mechanics-institute.jumbula.com/2022Tournaments/57thStamerMemorialChampionship](https://mechanics-institute.jumbula.com/2022Tournaments/57thStamerMemorialChampionship)

Mechanics’ Institute June Championship Quads
Saturday June 11, 2022, 3PM. USCF Rated. 4 games of G/30;d5
Information: [https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/mechanics-championship-quads](https://www.milibrary.org/chess-tournaments/mechanics-championship-quads)

Mechanics’ Institute Monthly Scholastic Swiss – In Person
Saturday June 11, 2022, 10AM. USCF Rated. 4 games of G/30;d5
Solutions to Tony’s Teasers

Problem #1: 1.Qa6! Kf3 (1...Kd5 2.Qc6#. 1...Kf5 2.Qg6#. 1...Ke3 2.Nc5#.) 2.Nf2#!

Problem #2: 1.Kh6. Zugzwang! 1...Ka7 (1...Bd5 2.Nh3 and 3.Qg1#. 1...Bh3 2.Nf3 and 3.Qg1#.) 2.Nf3+ Ka6 3.Qa5#.

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