NBA superstar Stephen Curry dropped by the Chess Room during Summer Camp on June 12! More pictures below.

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Recent Tournaments at Mechanics’ Institute

The 2023 Summer Tuesday Night Marathon ran from May 2 to June 13 with 103 players(!) competing in four sections over seven rounds.

The 2000+ section was won by Archit Dasika (2174) with six points. In clear 2nd was IM Elliott Winslow (2193) with 5.5 points, and clear 3rd was taken by Luke Widjaja (2143) with 4.5 points. There was a four-way tie for Best Under 2200 between Jasith Karthi (2020), Nitish Nathan (2151), Christophe Bambou (2072), and Sebastian Suarez (2049), all who scored 4 points.

Henry Benaid (1851) took clear 1st in the 1600-1999 section with 6 points, closely followed by Stephen Parsons (1782) with 5.5. Tied for 3rd were Michael Walder (1888) and Kristian Clemens (1865) with 5 points apiece. Wilson Wong (1753) won the Best Under 1800 prize with 5 points.

The 1200-1599 section was won by Nicholas Morello (1347) who scored 5.5 points, and there was a four-way tie for 2nd, 3rd, and Best Under 1400 between Sam Calvert (1361), Yorgos Tsolias (1536), Romeo Barreyro (1521), and Daniel Sisti (1210), all who scored 5 points.

There was a clear winner in the Under 1200 section as well, with Sheng Jian (unr.) taking the top spot with 6 points. Tied for 2nd, 3rd, and Best Under 1000 were Daniel Morris (976), Keyan Raahemifar (942), and Cameron Dale (unr.), all who posted up 5 points.

The final standings and results for the 2023 Summer TNM can be found here.

The 2023 Summer Tuesday Night Marathon was co-directed by Senior Tournament Directors, National Arbiter Scott Mason and International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.

On June 10th and 11th, Mechanics’ Institute hosted the FIDE-rated 22nd William Addison Memorial, named after the International Master who was the Chess Room Director from 1965 to 1969. The four-round swiss-system had a full-house of 80 players competing in three sections.

The 2000+ section was won jointly by Aadit Bhatia (2251) and Vedant Talwalkar (1974), each scoring an unbeaten 3.5 points. Clear 3rd was taken by Neil Bhaduri (2083) with 3 points. He was also undefeated, drawing both Bhatia and Talwalkar. Tied for Best Under 2200 and Best Under 2000, all scoring 2.5 points, were: Alex Shrauger (1989), Laurie Qiu (1878), Daniel Lin (2049), and Jayden Wu (2010).

Rohan Dash (1620) scored a perfect 4-0 to take the top prize in the 1600-1999 section. A full point behind him were five players who split 2nd, 3rd, Best Under 1800, and Best Under 1600: Greg Zhou (1775), Nursultan Uzakbaev (1525), Eugene Kim (1755), Calvin Rummens (1648), and Abhijith
Aravind (1438).

The Under 1600 section saw a three-way split for 1st, 2nd, and Best Under 1400, between Vihan Grover (1190), Hayes Marvin (1368), and Brian Wei, each scoring 3.5 points. There was also a three-way split for 3rd place, with Albert Starr (1500), Shreyank Krishnan (1307), and Junki Joe (unr.) all scoring 3 points. Tying for Best Under 1200 with 2.5 points apiece were April Ni (1133), and Sanushya Subramaniam (875).

The final standings and results for the 22nd William Addison Memorial can be found here.

The 22nd William Addison Memorial was directed by National Arbiter Scott Mason.

On June 20th, Mechanics’ Institute hosted our first Summer Celebration Blitz Tournament after the GM Vinay Bhat author talk (see below), and what an event it was! Eighty-two players competed in one big open section, headed by GMs Christopher Yoo and Vinay Bhat. Also playing were seven International Masters, four FIDE Masters, three National Masters, and WGM Rochelle Wu.

When the dust settled, IM Kyron Griffith (2437) took clear 1st place with an impressive 9-1 score, his only loss coming to Arthur Ismakov (2140). Four players tied for 2nd and 3rd, a half point back: GM Christopher Yoo (2698), IM Josiah Stearman (2460), FM Derek Wu (2326), and FM Pranav Sathish (2253). Benchly Buccat (1489) scored 7 points and took the top prize for Best Under 1800, while the Best Under 1300 prize went to Rajiv Chockalingam (1205) who scored 5.5 points.
Above, round one of the Summer Celebration Blitz is underway, with GM Christopher Yoo (far right) playing Ben Curtis, and GM Vinay Bhat (near left) taking on Rohan Kapre.

The final standings and results of the Summer Celebration Blitz can be found here.

The Summer Celebration Blitz was directed by National Arbiter Scott Mason.

The 22nd Charles Bagby Memorial was held on June 24th, with 77 participants competing in four sections.

Abhishek Handigol (2070) won the 2000+ section outright with 3.5 points from four games. In clear 2nd with 3 points was Ivan Zhou (1873), and splitting 3rd place were Dipro Chakraborty (2294) and Hanchi Yao with 2.5 points apiece.

The 1600-1999 section saw a 3-way split for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. Zee Chin (1797), Jacob Goldman (1791), and Achintya Rai all scored an undefeated 3.5 points.

In the 1200-1599 section, Elliott Regan (1384) and Zachary Ravel (1367) tied for 1st and 2nd places with 3.5 points apiece. Tying for 3rd with 3 points each were Hayes Marvin (1368), Romeo Nehme (1269), and Sriadity Pendyala (1210).

Ahmet Gunduz (unr.) won the Under 1200 section with a perfect 4-0 score. In clear 2nd with 3.5 points was Martin Long (unr.), and tying for 3rd place with 3 points apiece were Arav Munjal (769), Anastasia Paramonova (unr.), Aakash Jain (unr.), and Amar Masalmeh (unr.).

The final standings and results of the 22nd Charles Bagby Memorial can be found here.

The 22nd Charles Bagby Memorial was directed by Local TD Arthur Liou.

IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated Games from round seven of the Summer TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow and the players. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the Tournament Archive.
It's the last round, and once again Archit Dasika is in the driver's seat. With a half point ahead of Winslow, whom he'd already played and beaten, so paired against one of the Bambou. Christophe has a wide "game range," you don't know how tough it's going to be on any given day. On this occasion it was a close game only to see Bambou worn down in a curious pawn structure battle, somehow shifting from a Carlsbad Queen's Gambit Exchange Reversed from the Caro Kann, into a French-like formation. Which favored Black; the unbalancing trade of two rooks for queen and pawn maybe wasn't the most accurate, but the practical value with Bambou quite short on clock time proved sufficient. Archit likes moderate confusion but not all-out madness. So, for example, the London. And a position where his opponent has weak pawns is his cup of tea.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 The Caro-Kann Exchange Variation. It would be its own beast if, with colors reversed, it weren't just a queen's gambit exchange variation. The time-worn pawn breaks and attacking thoughts are still there. But it isn't always just minority attack and play on the half-open files. 4...Nf6 5.c3 Nc6 6.Bf4 Bg4 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Bd6 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 In the QGX, these bishops are the last minor pieces White (here Black) wants to exchange. 11.0-0 0-0 12.Rae1 Rab8 Directly playing for the Minority Attack b7-b5-b4.

[One big-name game saw some seemingly arbitrary moves by Black, but they tripped up someone who has been at the #2 spot on occasion for a while (#1? forget it): 12...Bxf3 13.Nxf3 Qc7 14.Re3 Rab8 15.Qd1 g6 16.Ng5 Qf4!? 17.Rg3 e5!? Both players play like movie kung fu, i.e. a lot of twisting and turning. 18.Nh3 Qh4 19.f4 (19.dxe5!? Nxe5 20.Re1) 19...exd4 20.Ng5 dxc3 21.Rh3 Qg4 22.Qc2 (22.Nxh7!? Qxd1 23.Nxf6+ Kg7 24.Rxd1 Kxf6 25.bxc3 is a rough terrain, but smooth "0.00" everywhere.) 22...Rbe8 23.Qxc3 Nh5 24.Nxh7 Kxh7 25.Rf3 Kg8 26.Qd2 Re7 27.Qf2 Rfe8 28.Rh4 Re1+ 29.Bf1 Qf5 30.g4 Qb1 31.Kg2 Rxf1 32.Qxf1 Qxf1+ 33.Kxf1 Nxf4 0-1 Aronian,L (2782)-Artemiev,V (2699) Meltwater Tour Final chess24.com INT rapid 2021 (2.2)]

13.Ne5 b5 14.Qc2 Bh5!

To neutralize White's bishop. 15.a3!?N [Previous blunt play was 15.b4 Rfc8 16.Qb1 a5 17.a3 Ne7 18.Re3 a4!? Something horrible has happened to White's pawns. 19.Rh3 Bg6 20.Bxg6 Nfxg6 21.f4 Re8 22.Qe1 Nd7 23.Qe2 Ndf8 24.Qh5 Rbc8 25.Nxg6 fxg6 Black's pawns as well 26.Qe2 Qb6 27.Rf3 Nd7 28.Re3 Nf6 29.g4?! New weaknesses for White,
and after an odd pawn exchange it turns out to be Black storming through: Qd6 30.Qf3 Rf8 31.Qg3 Rc7 32.Nf3 Ne4 33.Qh4 h6 34.Ne5 Rxf4 35.Nxg6 Rf6 36.Ne5 Ng5 37.Rhg3 Qf8 38.Kh1 Rc8 39.Rg1 Rf2 40.Qg3 Ne4 41.Qh3 Qf4 42.Ng6 Qf6 43.Ne5 Rf4 44.Rxe4 dxe4 0-1 Zuriel,M (2126)-Tokman,A (2330) ARG-ch sf 98th Buenos Aires 2023 (5) ]

15...Rfc8 16.Nb3 Bg6 17.Bxg6 hxg6 18.Qd3 [White can't grab c5 right away:
  18.Nc5? Nxe5 19.dxe5 Qb6+
followed by ...Nc5 is some plus for Black. ---a5 and ...b4 are still available, while there's no kingside attack at all. ]
  19.Nxc6! Qxc6 20.Qd1! freeing d3 for White's knight, when the advantage is his. The combination of a knight on e5 and doubled rooks on the e-file creates real pressure which would boil over with f2-f3, while ...f7-f6 is hard to engineer then. Stockfish finds an entertaining way for Black to create play, or at least reduce the danger: Kh7!? /!! intending ...Rh8! and ...Kg8! (...Rh5 and ...Rbh8 before ...Kg8 is a bit too much!) ]

19...Qd8 20.Rf3 a5 21.Rh3 Nxe5 22.fxe5 An optical illusion -- how did the White f-pawn and Black c-pawn exchange? 22...b4

19.f4?! Now the only way to remove the knight on e4 is to exchange it.
  [ 19.f3? Nxe5! 20.dxe5 Qb6+
followed by ...Nc5 is some plus for Black. ---a5 and ...b4 are still available, while there's no kingside attack at all. ]
  [ 19.Nxc6! Qxc6 20.Qd1! freeing d3 for White's knight, when the advantage is his. The combination of a knight on e5 and doubled rooks on the e-file creates real pressure which would boil over with f2-f3, while ...f7-f6 is hard to engineer then. Stockfish finds an entertaining way for Black to create play, or at least reduce the danger: Kh7!? /!! intending ...Rh8! and ...Kg8! (...Rh5 and ...Rbh8 before ...Kg8 is a bit too much!) ]

23.cxb4 axb4 24.a4 A standard counter to the minority attack, but the passed pawn doesn't ever quite make a difference (or does it? See move 38!).

24...Rc7 25.Nd2 Nxd2 26.Qxd2 Rbc8 27.Qxb4?! The extra open lines end up favoring Black,
  [ 27.Rf1 Qe7 28.Qf4 Rc2 29.b3 R8c3 30.Rhf3 Rb2= /± holds the line. ]

27...Rc4 28.Qd2 Rc2 29.Qf4 Rxb2 30.Rf3 Qe7 31.Re1 Rcc2

(Diagram)
32.Qg4?  
   [ 32.Rg3 Re2  ( 32...Ra2  33.h4! ) ]  
32...Rxg2+ leads to a solid advantage, where the queen runs circles around the rooks. And the king exposure doesn't help White's chances either.  
   [ 32...Qb4!+ is even stronger (threatening 33...Qxd4+!). 33.Rg3 Rd2 Black picks off the d-pawn, keeping the a-pawn well contained. ]  
33.Qxg2 Rxg2+ 34.Kxg2 Qb4 35.Rxf7 Qxd4 36.Rf1f4 Qb2+  
   [ 36...Qd2+! ]  
37.Rf2 Qxe5

38.Rf8+?! This nudges it over the edge.  
   [ 38.a5!? at least makes it harder. ]  
38...Kh7 39.Rf3 g5 40.Rh3+ Kg6  
41.Rg3 Qe4+ 42.Rgf3 Qxa4 43.h3 e5  
44.Rg4 e4 45.Rfg3 Qc2+ 46.Kh1 Qd1+  
   [ 46...e3! ]  
47.Kh2 Qd4 48.Rxg5+ Kf7 49.Rf5+ Ke6 50.Rfg5 Qf2+ 51.Kh1 e3  
52.Rg6+ Ke5 53.R3g4 e2 54.R6g5+ Kd6 55.Rg6+ Kc5 White lost on time. And that's that. Dasika stays a half a point ahead of Winslow for clear first. 0-1

□ Nathan,Nitish Sg 2151  
■ Winslow,Elliott 2173  
2023 Summer TNM: 2000+ (7.2) 13.06.23  
[Winslow,Elliott]

This game was rather epic. So up and down! So close for Nitish! I do see that just this last week he has finally, after crossing into the 2100s in a big way last November, he is now a Master. Congratulations! (I'm waving going down...) There is a sense of this being a battle of wills, first one player takes the initiative and advantage, then the other player digs in and recovers and then some, etc. Well, Chess is a Game of Mistakes is my Brandwein-like mantra. (Steve just didn't make very many, he showed me to just wait for the opponent to mess up.) 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 g6 3.e3 What? No Jobava?  
   [ 3.Nc3 is still raging. Of course Black can just allow the Pirc:  
A) 3...d5 hinders e2-e4 and is most common (and has a plus score in the online database) 4.Nb5 Na6 5.e3  
A1) 5...Bf7 6.Nf3 (6.h3)  
A1a) 6...c6 7.Nc3 (7.Na3!? )

A) 3...d5 hinders e2-e4 and is most common (and has a plus score in the online database) 4.Nb5 Na6 5.e3  
A1) 5...Bf7 6.Nf3 (6.h3)  
A1a) 6...c6 7.Nc3 (7.Na3!? )
7...Nb8;  
**A1b)** 6...0-0 7.h4!? c6 
8.Nc3;  
**A2)** 5...c6!? 6.Na3!?  
(Love those knights!) is only 4 games but White has done well (well, 6...Qb6 0-1, a 1600 vs. a 2000)(and double-well, the other three games were 3-0, but 2400s vs. mere masters);  
**B)** 3...Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Qd2  
and when White plays Bh6 it could have come from e3, f4, or g5 (!). ]  
3...Bg7 4.Nf3 The "Classical" London  
4...0-0 5.h3 c5  
[ 5...d6 6.Be2 ( 6.Nbd2 ) 6...Nbd7  
( 6...c5; 6...b6; 6...Nfd7!? )]  
6.c3  
[ 6.Nbd2!? d6 ( 6...Nc6!?; 6...cxd4 )  
7.Be2 Nc6 8.c3 cxd4 ½-½ Milov,V (2590)-Sutovsky,E (2480) ISR-ch Tel Aviv 1994 (4) ]  
6...d6  
[ 6...b6!? ]  
[ 6...cxd4 7.exd4 d6 0-1 Clark Foulquier,S-Georgiou,P (2251) Sutton op 1999 (2) ]  
7.Nbd2  
7...cxd4 8.exd4 Nc6 9.Be2

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**Nd5**  
[ 9...e5! is the Big Line. I won't get into it here (I've obviously forgotten it anyway), but it goes 10.dxe5 dxe5! 11.Nxe5 Nd5 12.Nxc6 bxc6 13.Bg3 Re8 ( 13...Bxc3 ) 14.0-0 Bxc3= 15.Qc1! Rxe2 16.bxc3 See Avrukh for details. ]  
[ 9...Re8 10.Nc4 Nd5 11.Bh2  
0-1 Borsuk,A (2100)-Agdelen,H (2206) Larnaca OFIS op 2nd 2021 (8) ]  
10.Bh2 e5 11.Nc4?!  
[ 11.0-0 ]
11...b5! I was so sure after the game that this was wrong, but Stockfish 15.1 backs me up.

[ 11...Re8?! isn't so bad, and I'll leave the endless game references out this time, but White can keep heads up. ½-½ (44) Djordjevic,D (1965)-Jandric, D (2011) SRB Kadetski festival U18 6th Vrnjacka Banja 2012 (6) ]

12.dxe5! Confession: overlooked.

12...dxe5  13.Ncxe5 Even here, the pawn sacrifice gives Black more than adequate play. 13...Nxe5  14.Bxe5


14...Bxe5?! "1/2?" A somewhat arbitrary draw offer by me. As it appears now, he might have been better off taking (objectively not so good acc. to the comp), but the difference between a tie with Luke for 3rd-4th and clear 2nd with a win (swapping places with me) was good odds to play on. Of course, we didn't know what would happen on Board 1 yet.

(Diagram)

15.Nxe5 Re8! 16.Qd4! (the only move to keep a balance) 16...Bb7! 17.0-0

We both play well (acc. to SF). Here it isn't even close: everything else loses.

[ 17.Bxb5 Qg5! (I didn't realize just how good during the game, but it's obvious, isn't it?) 18.Bxe8 Rxe8 19.Rd1 Rxe5+ 20.Kf1 Ne3+-+ is a nightmare. ]

17...f6=


(Diagram)
The only move, everything else -+, (-1.95) or worse. I was completely surprised. After a long thought I chose the line that avoids the perpetual; it's also fairly balanced, but on a knife-edge. 18...hxg6

[18...Rxe2 19.Qg4

A) 19...hxg6!


B) 19...Re8 ]

19.Bxb5?! Grabbing another pawn, threatening the rook, hard to resist!

[But SF prefers 19.Bf3! Re7 (19...Qd7 20.a4 a6= (White has b2-b3 and c3-c4) to disrupt) 20.Rfd1 Kg7 21.a4! Qg8! Oh, *that* was obvious a few moves ago... 22.Qc5! Qf8! (22...Qc8 23.Qd6 Rd8 24.Qc5=) 23.Bxd5! Re1+! 24.Rxe1 Qxc5 25.Bxb7 Rb8 it's even, especially after 26.b4! Qxc3 27.Rac1! Qxb4 28.Rc7+]

19...Rf8?! Another big chance I fumbled.

[I was trying to believe in 19...Re5! but after 20.f4 (20.Rae1!? Qe7 21.Qg4 Kg7 22.Rxe5 fxe5= White could still hold out hope to hold)]

(Diagram)
I missed that I had 20...Nxf4!
21.Bc4+! Nd5!± The missing f-pawn means my two outposts are safe (!).

20.Rad1 Qc7
[20...Kg7 might be a better try, maybe not. But as usual I didn't see what he was up to.]

21.Bc4
[21.Rfe1!? Rad8 22.Qxa7
(four pawns starts to get annoying!)
Nf4 23.Rxd8 Rxd8 24.Ba6 Rd7!±
25.Qxb7 Qxb7 26.Bxb7 Rxb7 27.b3±
And Stockfish can count just as well as we can. White has the better chances to win, although nothing scheduled.]

21...Rad8 22.Qe4!

Qf7? Another case of overlooking Nitish's next move.
[22...f5! 23.Qd4 (23.Qh4 f4! has a couple perpetual check variations.) 23...g5!!= Not that I understand: White could take on a7 or just get that last rook into play (slightly better), when the evaluations have a lot of zeroes in them.]

23.Rd4!± He's just going to double and there's not a lot I can do about it. If it had *really* been Summer (What *is* with calling this the Summer TNM anyway? It's a week off) I would have been sweating on the board. 23...f5?+ My bad habit of "lashing out" when it's getting rough.
[23...Kg7 24.Rfd1□ Rfe8 25.Qc2
(25.Qd3 Re5 26.f4 Rf5±) 25...Qc7!
26.Qd2! Re5!± when White has various ways of proceeding. 27.a4!? (27.b4!?)]

24.Qd3+- Best by a lot. 24...Rd7
25.Rd1! Rfd8

(Diagram)
26.Qd2?? Nitish came so far and now --what? Lured by dreams of mate on the h-file?
   [ 26.Bb5+- is clearly indicated and best, and I hadn't come up with an answer. Stockfish just gives up the rook for bishop. ]
26...Bc6!? With great relief I shut *that* down!
   [But more sophisticated was 26...Qf6! 27.Qh6!? ( 27.Bb5? Bc6? give what edge there is to Black. I *am* up a piece, sorta...) 27...Rh7! 28.Qe3 Rhd7± 29.b4 There is still the march of the pawns, but Black appears to have time to come up with a defence. ]
27.Qg5?!
   [ 27.b4! Kg7 28.b5 Ba8± 29.Qb2 Qf6 30.R1d3 f4!± Black has ...Qf5 and ...Nb6 to depressurize. ]
27...Kg7= (0.00)
   [ 27...Kf8= (0.00) ]
28.Rh4 Qe7! 29.Qh6+ Kf6
   (Diagram)

   [ 30.f4 Qg7 31.Qg5+ Kf7= is risky (but ultimately a hold as well). ]
30...Qg7!± 31.Qd2?!
   [ 31.Qc1 g5? ]
31...Nb6!
   [ 31...g5! is apparently just as good, but hard to imagine playing. ]
32.Qe2?! I was the one with less time, but he's starting to wither.
32...Qe7!± I didn't think of it at the time, but it looks like when with a piece against pawns, you want to queens off, and the rooks on. Is that true? It was here.
   [ 33.Qxe7+ Kxe7 34.Re1+ ]
   [ 34.Rxd7+ Rxd7 35.Rxd7+ Bxd7 36.Bb3 Be6 is going to be hard, but for him more than for me. ]
34...Kf8! 35.Rxd7 Rxd7 36.Bb3 Bd5? [ 36...Rd2! 37.Re6 Be8? ]
   (Diagram)
Rxb2?? Here was the unlocked door or open window or whatever metaphor works.

[ 42...Rxf2  43.Kg3!]

A) 43...Rxb2

A1) 45.h4 g4 46.Rb8 Nc4
47.Rxb2 (47.Rb4 Rxb4 48.cx b4 Na3+ ) 47...Nxb2 48.Kf4 Nd3+ 49.Ke3 Nh5+ somehow this is a big win.;

A2) 45.a3! Kg6! 46.Rb8!+ and there’s work to do, a lot of it.;

B) 43...Rc2! ]

43.a4??

[ 43.Rb7!= ]

43...Ke5+?

[ 43...Nd5! 44.c4 Nf4 45.Ra6+ Kg5 46.Kg3 Nh5+ 47.Kf3 Rb3+ 48.Ke2 Nf4+ 49.Kd2 Rb2+ 50.Kc3 Rxf2 51.a5 Nxe2 52.Ra8 f4+=
A precarious endgame! But Black appears to have it won. ]

44.a5?!

[ 44.Ra5+ Kf4 45.Rb5 Nxa4 46.Rb4+!] 

44...Nd5! 45.a6?!

[ 45.Kg1 Nxc3+] 

45...Rxf2! 46.Kg3 Ra2 47.Ra8 [47.c4 ]

47...Na7+ I would have breathed a sigh of relief had I not been too close to playing just on the delay. I had what, about a minute. So why was I keeping score?

[ 47...Nxc3 ]

48.Ra7 Nxa6 49.Rg7 Kf6 50.Rb7 Nc5 51.Rb6+ Ne6 52.Rc6 g5 53.Kf3 Ke5 54.Rc4 Rc2 55.g3 Kd5 56.Rc8 Nc5+ [△56...Rh2 but I was starting to work up my confidence by now. ]

(Diagram)
That was the last move I recorded (I pocketed my pen and put the scoresheet on the other side of the table, to force myself to prioritize winning the game!). Nitish might have more moves (but at some point his time dwindled to under five minutes and he stopped).

0-1

B33
Suarez, Sebastian 2049
Ivanenko, Anthony Vladimir 2127
2023 Summer TNM: 2000+ (7.4) 13.06.23
[Ivanenko, Tony]

Back into the Sveshnikov we go! 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bg5
Sebastian elects to go for the main variation with 7. Bg5. This line has been explored and debated in many games (over 55 000, to be precise!) and the consensus has become as follows: a once-interesting opening has dried up into a boring draw. Still, there have some advances made to liven up the main line Sveshnikov, so it still seems some play.

[ 7.Nd5 is another line that has been (unfortunately for me, as I have to now study it carefully) popularized by the 2018 World Championship Match between Magnus Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana. It was also featured in one of my games this tournament where I exhibited a rather poor defense against an unsound sacrifice. Nxd5 8.exd5 Nb8 9.c4 Nd7 10.Bd3 Be7 11.0-0 a6 12.Nc3 0-0 13.Qc2 g6 14.Bh6 Re8 15.Rae1 f5 16.Bxf5 gxf5 17.Qxf5 Nf8 18.Qh5 Ng6 19.f4 exf4 20.Bxf4 Rf8 21.Bh6 Rxf1+ 22.Rxf1 Qb6+ 23.Kh1 Qxb2 24.Qf3 Kh8 25.Qf7 Qxc3 26.Qe8+ Bf8 27.Rxf8+ Nxf8 28.Qxf8# 1-0 Qiu,L (1886)-Ivanenko,A (2127) Summer TNM 2023 (4) ]

7...a6 8.Na3 b5 9.Nd5
The more positional approach of the main line Sveshnikov, often appropriately dubbed the "Positional line". White decides to immediately grab the central outpost and use the "fingers" of the knight to prod the position. It is questionable how useful this knight is, though, as often Black generates excellent wing play. Black's goal in the future will be to undermine the center with an ...f7-f5 break.

[ 9.Bxf6 is the other, sharp line that was once considered the main line, but all the offensive resources have already been tried and tested, and found to not be overly challenging to Black's set-up, so it's mostly featured in blitz and rapid games these days. ]

9...Be7 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c4!? A more ambitious continuation. This used to be very popular back in my heyday circa 2013 when I was a young lad. Truth be told, I'm not quite certain as to the popularity of this variation, I always felt it allowed Black to equalize a little too easily -- most of the time, Black
actually wants to play ...b5-b4 in the main line, and here White is gifting us that freely! Not to mention that the light-squared bishop would have really preferred to have access to that c4-square as well. 11...b4 As previously stated, this is the strongest continuation and is sufficient for an equal game. The only downside is that it's somewhat boring as the center becomes fixed. A dynamic Sveshnikov player would really prefer to go for a more dynamic continuation by sacrificing the pawn on b5, but unfortunately all these kinds of lines are very suspicious from a theoretical point of view. 12.Nc2 0-0 13.Qd3 [13.Nxb4 is not scary at all for Black. After Nxb4 14.Nxb4 Qb6= Black will end up recouping the pawn one way or the other.]

13...a5 14.g3 g6 This is actually a relatively new continuation that has been getting tested at top level, and has even been played by Fabiano Caruana at the 2019 US Championship against Samuel Sevian. The point is that Black prefers the bishop on g7 rather than g5, where it will be more useful x-raying the long diagonal and won't present itself as a target for White's kingside pawns. However, there are alternatives.

[14...Bg5]  [14...Be6]

15.Bg2 Bg7 16.0-0 Be6 This has been all standard Sveshnikov warfare up until now. 17.Rad1 [17.a3 was played in the game I previously mentioned. bxa3 18.Qxa3 Qb8 19.Rfd1 Ra7 20.b3 Rb7 21.Rab1 Nd4 22.Nxd4 exd4 23.Bf1 h5 24 Bd3 h4 25.Qxa5 Rxb3 26.Qd2 Bxd5 27.exd5 Bf6 28.Qc2 Rxb1 29.Rxb1 Qa7 30.Qd2 Kg7 31.Qf4 Qa3 32.Qe4 Rh8 33.Rb7 Qc1+ 34.Bf1 hxg3 35.hxg3 Rh5 36.Rb1 Qc3 37.Rd1 Be5 38.Bd3 Qb2 39.Qe2 Qb8 40.Rb1 Qc8 41.Qf3 Bf6 42.Re1 Re5 43.Rxe5 Bxe5 ½-½ Sevian,S (2642)-Caruana, F (2828) USA-ch 63rd Saint Louis 2019 (1) ]

17...Qb8!? I would like to bring close attention to this ...Qb8 move since it's quite thematic in these variations. The queen is better suited to be on the b-file, where it may be defending and supporting the b-pawn in the future and freeing the d8-square for its rook instead to double up on protection of the d6-pawn. 18.Nde3N This is quite a new way to play, I must admit! Sebastian pulls back the knight to prevent it from being captured by the e6-bishop and thus indicates his intention to push the f2-pawn in the near future. I had to go for a long think regarding this.


18...Rd8 First, get some protection going on the d6-pawn. 
[ 18...a4 would have also worked, the idea being that after 19.Qxd6 Better is 19.b3, transposing. Qxd6 20.Rxd6 Rfc8 White's c4-pawn isn't going to last long anyway and Black obtains a lot of pressure on the kingside. ] 
[ 18...b3! was an interesting idea I had to induce weaknesses in White's pawn structure and open the b-file for Black's majors, and it's also fine, though precise care is needed. 19.axb3 
A) and not 19...Rd8?! which is what I was thinking, as after 20.Ra1 (20.f4?! exf4 21.gxf4 Bxb2=) 20...Ra7 21.Ra3± White solidifies and retains a small plus.;  
B) 19...Nd4! 20.Nxd4 exd4 21.Nc2 a4!= Black equalizes. ]

19.b3 a4

[My other idea was 19...Qb6!? and it's not bad either, although please do not intend what I did with 20.f4 f5? when (20...exf4 is better, transposing to main text ideas. ) 21.Kh1 fxe4 22.Bxe4 exf4 23.gxf4 Ra7 24.f5+ just activates White's pieces and they're ready to launch a kingside assault. ]

Countering White's kingside intentions by counter-playing on queenside. I'm happy to see in the post-game analysis that my positional ideas are quite well received by the engine — it was missed tactical opportunities that did me in as we'll see later on. 20.f4 axb3 21.axb3 exf4 22.gxf4 Ra2! 
[ 22...Qb6 23.f5 Ne5 24.Qd2 Bc8= Black is fine, but doesn't have any pressure so is just holding at this point. ]
[ I also considered 22...Bc3 23.f5 Ne5 24.Qe2 Bc8= and this is also fine. ]

(Diagram)
A complete monster move, and happy to say I found this idea over the past few moves. Black has other playable moves, but the issue with those is that while Black holds equality, he doesn't obtain any initiative or pressure to bother White with, and as we all know — defending is much more difficult than attacking. Now, White is realizing that all of his pieces are actually quite loose, he has trouble moving one piece without giving Black some kind of compensation in return. 23.f5 White goes for it.

23...Ne5 Another good move, pushing back White's queen onto the second rank, when the e3-knight becomes vulnerable to tactics due to the resulting pin of the c2-knight.

[23...Bc8 was also fine. I was somewhat worried about the potential 24.Qd5?! Qc7 25.f5g5 hxg5 But all White has are spooky phantoms and nothing more.]

24.Qd2?

[24.Qe2 was the right placement, protecting the c4-pawn, after which the simple Bc8= and White's play fizzes.]

24...Bc8

A mistake. The problem is that the c2-knight is rather vulnerable now...

24...Bh6? And of course, I played back a mistake with confidence, taking only about a minute to ponder on this. Of course, every single time I only take a minute on the move — it turns out that was the critical position.

[24...Bxc4!! I only noticed this brilliant continuation on my opponent's turn and almost groaned out loud. Black sacrifices the bishop to remove the pawn from the b3-square. 25.bxc4 Qa7! An important intermezzo, removing the queen from the b-file.

(25...b3? 26.Rb1= Pinning the pawn to the queen.) 26.Kh1 b3+ Black is going to be up a pawn and what a dangerous pawn it is!]

25.Qd4? White throws it right back to Black.

[25.fxe6! was actually completely fine for White and the best move. I naively thought that Bxe3+ 26.Qxe3 Rxc2 27.exf7+ Nxf7 was fine for Black, but didn't realize that after 28.e5 Nxe5 29.Bd5+ Kh8 30.Qg5= White is threatening 31.Qf6, with a dangerous attack.]

25...Bc8 Black is forced to retreat his
bishop, but actually he's still completely fine in this position. However, getting close to time trouble, I misevaluated the following sequence.

[ 25...Bxc4? doesn't work this time, because after 26.Nxc4 Rxc2 27.Nxe5 dxe5+- The rook is hanging. ]
[ 25...Bg7? is also met by 26.fxe6! ( 26.f6? Bh6= is perfectly good for Black. ) 26...Nf3+ 27.Rxf3 Bxd4 28.exf7+ Kh8 29.Nxd4+- And White's three minors plus passed pawn more than compensate for the queen. ]

26.Ra1 Qa8? Bah! A terrible looking move, but I wasn't sure where my compensation was after giving up the a-file. But as it turns out, the compensation was in the advantage in activity of Black's minor pieces after the queens are swapped off the board!

[ 26...Rxa1! Giving up the a-file was completely right, since Black's powerful minor pieces more than compensate for it after 27.Rxa1 Bb7 ( or 27...Bg7 28.Qa7 Bb7= which is what I had in mind. ) 28.Qb6 Ba8 29.Qxb8 Rxb8= Black is actually quite solid here, and White has the issue of attempting to disentangle his knights (never use a knight to guard another knight is an old adage!) ]

27.Nd5?! [ 27.Qb6 was more precise, instantly striking at the d8-rook. Bg5 28.f6± Black is having major issues with piece coordination here. ]

(Diagram)

27...Nc6?? The final blunder made in time pressure. The knight was perfectly placed on e5 but here it's just loose.

28.Qb6! I don't know how I saw this only after I played 27...Nc6.

[ For some reason, I was counting on 28.Qd1?? after which Bg7 29.Rxa2 Qxa2= just equalizes. ]

28...Kg7 The problem was that White was threatening 29.Qxc6 followed by 30. Ne7, forking the queen and winning a piece.

[ 28...Kh8 just converts to the main text. ]
[ 28...Bd7 is met with 29.Rxa2 Qxa2 30.Ne7+- ]
[ 28...Bb7 29.Rxa2 Qxa2 30.Qxb7+- is no better. ]


[ 30...Qa7!? was an interesting resource I missed. It doesn't work here, of course, but the idea is that after 31.f6+ Kf8 32.Qxa7 ( 32.Nxc6?! runs into Qxb6+ 33.Nxb6 Be3+ 34.Kh1 Bxb6 35.Nxd8 Bxd8+- and while this is winning for White, it's not the first time somebody fails to convert a rook vs bishop endgame, although with the extra (connected]
and passed) pawn, the task is more trivial. 32...Nxa7 Black would just be a pawn down and retain some hope if not for 33.Ra1+- winning the piece.]

31.Qxc6
[I was hoping for 31.Nxc6? which falls to Qxb6+ 32.Nxb6 Be3+ 33.Kh1 Bxb6 34.Nxd8 Bxd8+- and despite the engine evaluation, I wouldn't be confident in just about anybody being able to convert it -- it requires some skill and precision.]

31...gxf5 32.exf5 Kh8 33.Qc7 Rg8 At this point, Black is hoping for mating tricks on the open g-file or perhaps a perpetual. 34.Qxd6 Be3+[Unfortunately 34...Qh3 doesn't work for a variety of reasons, for example: 35.Qf6+Bg7 36.Bxh3 Bxf6+- This should be easy to convert for White.]

35.Kh1
[35.Nxe3 Qxe3+ 36.Kh1 Qe2 37.Rg1+- is also a fine way to dash Black's hopes.]

35...Bd4 36.Ne7

[XIIIIIIIIY 9-+l+-+rmk({9+-+-sNp+p'} 9-+-wQ-+-+& 9+-+-+P+-% 9-sNPvl-+-+$/ 9+q+-+-+-# 9-+-+-+LzP" xabcdefghy

Rxg2 37.Qxd4+ Rg7 38.Qd8+
(Beauty=10.0) With mate in 1 left, Black resigns this game.
1-0

This is the section-winning game by Henry Benaid. After five rounds he was in clear first by a whole point, with a perfect 5-0 score! But a loss to the only player with 4, Stephen Parsons, Thus into the last round tied, but playing others. At that point there were three players a half point back, but one (Kristian Clemens) had already taken a half point bye, and another, Michael Walder, had already played (and lost to) Benaid -- so the pairings were clear. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5 Of course the usual move by a huge margin is 2...d5. I confess that every time someone plays the Morra Gambit against my Sicilian, 1.e4 c5 2.d4, I think about this move! I can't quite bring myself to play it. But Benaid's success might yet inspire me!

3.d5 The principled reply, taking the Benoni space.

[3.c3 ]
[3.Nf3]

3...exd5 4.exd5 d6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bg5?! In a moment this bishop will be a liability, open to a common tactical mini.

[Relevant: 6.Bd3 Be7 7.0-0 0-0 8.c4 Bg4 9.Nbd2 Bh5 ½-½ Kovalenko,I (2653)-Miezis,N (2499) Baltic zt Tallinn 2015 (1)]


9. c4?! Stockfish all but gives this a "?" -- is it a waste of time? Something else? [ 9.h3!  Bb5  10. Nc3 ]

9... a6!? [ 9... Nxd5! which leads to "0.00" on the computer via: Stockfish 15.1: 10. Qxd5  Bxg5  11. Qxb7  Nd7  12. Nxd5  Bxe2  13. Qe4  Qxg5  14. Qxe2  Rae8  15. Qc2  Ne5  16. f4  Nf3+  17. Rxf3  Re1+  18. Rf1  Rxf1+  19. Kxf1  Qxf4+  20. Kg1  Qe3+  21. Kf1  Qf4+  0.00/28 Wow! But I'll bet Henry is glad he didn't even see this (if in fact he didn't -- if he did he should be in the top section next TNM :-)) ]

10. a4  Nbd7


11. Nbd2?

[ Stockfish liked 11. Bc1!? for a while, ]

[ before silicon sanity prevailed and it preferred 11. Nc3 ]

8... Bg4N This certainly seems appropriate to me, according to the proverb "With less space, exchange a pair of minor pieces, even bishop for knight." And again! Stockfish doesn't agree. In any case, the overall reason I don't play this ...e6 and ...c5 line (either move order) is that this isn't the sort of play I hope for in the Benoni. (And apparently I just don't "get it."

[A peaceful result came from 8... Na6  9. Nc3  Nc7  10. a4  Re8  11. Re1  h6]
Now it's getting serious. 11...Re8?!\[11...Nxd5! 12.Bxe7 Nxe7 13.Ne4 Ng6? Of course the d-pawn is doomed, but Black will have the better minor pieces in the resulting symmetrical pawn structure. (13...Nc6 14.Qxd6! Re8 15.Qf4 Nf6\] 12.h3! Bxf3 13.Nxf3 Ne4?! No backup. 13...Ne5 14.Bxe7? Throws away all the advantage. 14...Rxe7= Stockfish still gives White some nominal advantage, but it's all mostly zeros. In other words, Black shouldn't have any worries. In fact White is the one who has the slight concern of the worst minor piece (bad bishop!). 15.Re1 15.Bd3 "0.14" 15...Qc7 15...Qa5! also gets out of the way of the a-rook but with more bang for the buck. 16.Bd3 Rae8= 17.Bxe4 There's a solution. But now there is no value to the space advantage at all. 17...Rxe4 18.Rxe4 Rxe4 19.Qc2 Nf6 20.Kf1 h6 21.Re1 Rxe1+ 22.Nxe1 Qd7 23.b3 b5 Black is starting to develop the upper hand (but not yet) 24.axb5 axb5 25.Qe2 bxc4 26.bxc4 Qf5 27.f3? Oh, any queen move was better than this! 27...Qf4 It doesn't take much to lose a game: those loosened dark squares will be quite a problem. 28.Nc2 g6 28...h5\[ and next without fail ...h4, nails it down. 29.g4? hxg4 30 hxg4
29.g4?+ Not that this was to be feared! It gets even looser. 29...Kg7 30.Kg2 Qc1?

[ 30...Nd7! is the way to go: 31.Ne3 Ne5 is almost Zugzwang! 32.h4 Kf8 33.Kf2 h5! 34.Kg2 (34.gxh5 Qxh4+ 35.Kg2 Qg5+! 36.Kf2 Qxh5) 34...hxg4 35.fxg4 Qe4+ 36.Kf2 Nd3+ 37.Kg1 Nf4 just gets worse and worse (...Qf3) ]

31.Ne3! And White is close to equality! 31...Qb1 32.h4 h5

33.g5?
[ 33.Nd1= ]
[ 33.Nf1= ]

33...Nd7! 34.f4?
[ 34.Qc2 Qe1 35.Qf2 Qc1 36.f4 Kg8 (!) is something for Black, but hardly a win (yet). ]

34...Qe4+ 35.Qf3 Qd4= 36.Kg3 Kg8

37.f5? The house comes down after this. 37...Ne5! 38.Qf4 Qd3

[ 38...Qd2! 39.Qf2 (39.fxg6 Ng6) 39...Qd3 ]

39.Kf2?!
[ 39.Kg2! Qd2+ 40.Qf2 Qd4 41.fxg6 Qe4+ 42.Kh3 fxg6 is still a win ]

39...Qd2+ 40.Kg3 Nd3! Very nicely done. 41.Qf3 Qe1+ 42.Kh3 Qg1
[ 42...Ne5 ]

43.Ng2 Qd4= Or not! It's still not easy, requires precise calculation.

[ 43...Nf2+ 44.Kg3 Ng4 45.Kf4 Ne5= ]

44.Ne3?

[ 44.fxg6! fxg6 45.Kg3 Qxc4! A) 46.Qf6 Qg4+ 47.Kh2 Ne5 avoids the checks in an interesting way: 48.Qd8+ Kf7! 49.Qc7+ Ke8 (49...Qd7) 50.Qb8+ Ke7+ and block on d7. ]

B) 46.Qe2! Ne5! 47.Qxc4 Nxc4
48.Nf4 Kf7

and -- is this a win? ]

44...Ne5 45.Qe2 Qf4
[ 45...Qe4! ]
46.f6 Nf3 47.Kg2 Nhx4+ 48.Kh3 Nf3
A fitting win for the section champion!
0-1

Meanwhile Parsons tried to blow Walder off the board, but was lucky not for it to happen the other way around! 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4 Bg7 5.Be2 0-0 6.h4!? The "Checkmate! Now!" line. Well, not really -- as often as not the pawn goes to h6 to restrict Black's bishop as in the game.
[ 6.Nf3 is the Main Main Line, often leading to the Mar Del Plata Variation which really caught on in the early fifties and is still going strong. e5 7.0-0 ( 7.d5; 7.Be3 ) 7...Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 ]
[ 6.Bg5 is the Averbakh Variation ]

6.Be3!? is the currently trending "Two Bishops" Variation (what else to call it?), which is indeed causing KID players grief.

6...c5 "Wing attack is met by counter in the center" 7.d5 e6
[ Jones recommends a Benko Gambit style with 7...b5 ]
8.h5 exd5 9.h6
[ 9.exd5 Re8 10.h6 1-0 Grischuk,A (2759)-Gelfand,B (2686) Amsterdam Levitov blitz 2019 (3) ]
[ 9.cxd5 ]
9...Bh8 10.cxd5?! -0.13/32
10...Re8 0.26/32
[ 10...b5! -0.13/32 ]
11.f3 -1.03/32
[ 11.Qc2= 0.26/32 ]
11...Nh5!†

(Diagram)
12.\textit{g4N}

[Predecessor: 12.\textit{Bd2 Be5} 13.\textit{g4 Nf4} 14.\textit{Nh3 Qh4+} 15.\textit{Kf1 Nxe3} 16.\textit{Be1 Bg5} 17.\textit{Kg2 Bxe1} 18.\textit{Rxh3} 0-1 (26) Lee,R-Taboas Rodriguez,D (2309) Dos Hermanas 2004 ]

12...\textit{Ng3} 13.\textit{Rh3 Nxe2} 14.\textit{Ngxe2 Nd7} 15.\textit{Bf4 Ne5} 16.\textit{Qc2} -1.43/27

[White should try 16.\textit{Bxe5} -1.09/33 \textit{Bxe5} 17.\textit{Qd2} ]

16...\textit{a6} -1.06/34

[ △16...\textit{b5} -1.43/27 17.\textit{Nxb5 Rb8} ]

17.\textit{Rg3} -1.72/28

[ 17.\textit{Kf2}\textsuperscript{=} -1.06/34 was called for. ]

\textbf{(Diagram)}

Bh8 Strongly threatening \ldots\textit{Qh4}. 20.\textit{Kf2 Ra7} White must now prevent \ldots\textit{b4}.

[ 20...\textit{Qh4} 21.\textit{Kg2 Qxh6} 22.\textit{Rh1}\textsuperscript{=} ]

21.\textit{Re1 Rae7} Threatens to win with \ldots\textit{b4}.

[ 21...\textit{Qh4} 22.\textit{Kg2 Qxh6} 23.a3\textsuperscript{=} ]

22.\textit{Ng1 f5} 23.\textit{gx5 Bf5} And now \ldots\textit{b4} would win. 24.\textit{exf5?} -5.31/27 \textit{Rxe1} 25.\textit{Nce2}

(\textbf{Diagram})
It's worth a peek to see how Nicholas Morello managed to sneak by all those 5-2 scores to win the 1200-1599 section!

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 The Albin Counter Gambit!? 3.e3 A passive approach.
   [3.dxe5 d4 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.a3]

3...exd4 4.exd4 But not too passive!
This is now an Exchange French Defense with 4.c4. 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+

26...Qh4?? 0.14/34
   [25...Qh4+ -5.01/31 26.Kxe1 Qxg3+ 27.Kf1 Qh4]

26.Nxg1?? -1.81/36
   [26.Kxg1= 0.14/34 and White is okay.
   Qh4 27.fgx6 Rxe2 28.gxh7+ Kf7
   29.Qg6+ Ke7 30.Qg5+ (30.Qg7+ Bxg7 31.Kf1 Rxb2 32.Re3+ Kd7
   33.Re2 Qxf4+ 34.Kg2 Rxe2+ 35.Kh3 Rh2#) 30...Qxg5 31.fxg5 Bd4+
   32.Kh1]

26...Qh4? 0.00/54
   [26...Bd4++ -1.81/36 27.Kg2 Bxg1
   28.Kxg1 Qa5]

27.Nf3= Qxf4 28.fgx6 Really sharp!
28...Be5 29.gxh7+ Kh8 30.Rg8+ Rxg8
31.hxg8Q+ Kxg8 Endgame KQB-KQN
32.Qg6+ Kh8 33.h7 Qf8 Inhibits Qg8+.
34.b3= 0.00/54
   [Of course not 34.Qg8+ Qxg8
   35.hxg8N Kxg8=]

34...Bg7 0.00/56 35.Ke3
½-½

[But when it gets down to the last]
precedent, it's a couple A players...
7...Bxf3 8.Bxf3 Qe7+ 9.Kf1 Bxd2
0-0-0 13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.Bxd5 Nf6
15.Bf3 Rxd4 16.b3 Rhd8 17.g3 Nd7
18.Kg2 Ne5 19.Rhe1 f6 20.Re2 a5
21.Be4 g6 22.h4 c6 23.h5 gxh5
24.Bxh7 Kc7 25.Bf5 Rd2 26.Rae1
Kb6 27.Kf1 Kc5 28.Rxd2 Rxd2
½-½ Charvein,G (1883)-Boghossian,P
(1988) Bouches du Rhone-ch 1415
Vitrolles 2014 (8) ]
8.Bxb4 Nxb4 9.0-0
[ 9.Qa4+! Nc6 10.Nc3 is some tiny
advantage. ]
9...Nf6 10.Bxc4 0-0 At this point Black
has some edge already. 11.Qb3 Bxf3

15.f3? This might look like it stunts
Black's bishop, but it was probably
trading off any -- so it's then just (1)
weakening a7-g1 (2) taking away a nice
knight square.
[Something simple: 15.Rfe1= ]
15...c6
[ 15...Qd7! Get right on play on the d-
file against that poor pawn. ]
16.a4 Bxc4 17.Qxc4?!
[ 17.Nxc4!≠ ]
17...Qd5?!

[ 17...Nd5! Might as well annoying
White with a knight fork threat. ]
18.Qxd5 Nxd5 19.Ne4
[ 19.Nc4!= /+= pressures a5]
19...Ne3
[ 19...Rad8 ]
rook guard the pawn 21...b6 22Nb3
Oh great -- passive and unprotected.
22.Nf5 Logical! 23.Rc1 Re6
[ 23...Re3! 24.Rc3 Re1+ 25.Rf1
Re6 ]
24.Rc3 Re1+?! [ 24...Nxd4! ]
25.Rf1 Rxf1+?! 26.Kxf1

Rd6 27.g4
27...Ne7 28.Re3 Kf8 29.Re4 h6
33.Kc3?!
[ 33.Nd2= ]
33...Rd5 34.Nd2 Nd6 35.Rf4?+! Ke7
36.Ne4 Rf5?!
[ 36...g5≠ ]
Nxe4 40.fxe4

(Diagram)
g5??
[ 40...Kd6= ]
[ 40...Ke6= ]
41.h3??
[ 41.d5! takes advantage of Black's far-back-ish "outside majority": cxd5 42.exd5 Kd7 43.Ke4 Kd6 44.Ke4 h5 45.Ke4 g4 46.Kf4! Just in time! Kxd5 47.Kg5 The g- and h-pawns go; who's got the outside passed pawn NOW? ] Meanwhile, that h-pawn move reminds me of Tiananmen Square. 41...Ke6=

42.b3??+ These little pawn moves, eating up the last tempo, can be fatal!

42...h5 It takes my poor little computer a while to appreciate how bad this is.
43.Ke3 No more tricks? If only... 43...b5 44.Kf3 Kd6 45.Ke2

46.bxa4= c5

47.e5+??
[ 47.dxc5+ = ]
[ 47.Kd3= ]
47...Kd5 48.e6 Kxe6 49.dxc5 Kd5
50.c6 Kxc6 51.Ke3 Kc5 52.Ke4 Kb4 53.Kf5 g4 54.h4 g3 55.Kg5 g2 56.Kxh5 g1Q 57.Kh6 Qh2 58.h5 Kxa4 59.Kg6 Kb5 60.h6 a4 61.Kg7 a3 62.Kg6 a2 63.Kh7 a1Q 64.Kg8 Qc7 65.h7 Qa8# Not a perfect game at all (hey, this is for the under-1600 section!) -- but instructive, entertaining, and crucial for the rest of those poor 2nd-place guys!
0-1
The Chess Club, Past and Present

NBA legend **Stephen Curry** signed a chess board on his visit to Mechanics’ Institute...
... and attended a lecture by Chess Program Manager Alex Robins.
GM Peter Biyiasis won the Northern California State Championship in 1983, held at Mechanics’ Institute. Chess Voice ran from 1970 to 1985, and featured many local tournament reports and articles from Northern California. Every back issue can be found in PDF format at http://www.chessdryad.com/
Mechanics’ Institute chess coach **Quinn Ni** (right) found a place to play on a recent visit to the Presidential Palace in Vilnius, Lithuania.

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**POPOV WINS MECHANICS’ INSTITUTE RATING TOURNAMENT**

Boris Popov, a veteran of the old Russian Chess Club of San Francisco who hasn’t played for a long time, returned to the chess wars a couple of years ago and now has won his first tournament on the comeback trail. The event was a Tuesday night rating tournament held during the winter at the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Club. The tournament was directed by the Chess Room Director, Raymund Conway.

**MECHANICS’ INSTITUTE TUESDAY TOURNAMENT, 1973**

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<td>1729</td>
<td>W6</td>
<td>W20</td>
<td>L1</td>
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<td>W22</td>
<td>W11</td>
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<td>4. M. Chen</td>
<td>UR</td>
<td>D8</td>
<td>D35</td>
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<td>5. P. Grey</td>
<td>2043</td>
<td>W19</td>
<td>W24</td>
<td>D2</td>
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<td>6. Dr. R. Gross</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>W33</td>
<td>W30</td>
<td>W22</td>
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<td>D18</td>
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<td>7. L. Stevens</td>
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<td>8. R. Freeman</td>
<td>1751</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>L22</td>
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<td>W27</td>
<td>L11</td>
<td>W31</td>
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<td>9. D. Bennett</td>
<td>1565</td>
<td>W13</td>
<td>L7</td>
<td>W34</td>
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<td>1 Point:</td>
<td>35. L. Pierce.</td>
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<td>0 Point:</td>
<td>36. D. Evans.</td>
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The crosstable from the very first Tuesday Night Marathon at Mechanics’ Institute, held in the Winter of 1972. From the *California Chess Reporter*, March/April 1973.
We were honored to have GM Vinay Bhat give a lecture and sign copies of his new book *How I Became a Grandmaster* before the Summer Celebration Blitz Tournament. Vinay grew up at the club, cutting his teeth against our top players – his book mentions Mechanics’ Institute throughout. There is an interview with Vinay from ChessBase India [here](#), and another interview with Vinay on the Perpetual Chess podcast can be listened to [here](#). A review of Vinay’s book by IM Yian Liou is below.

GM Vinay Bhat is introduced by Alyssa Stone, Mechanics’ Institute Senior Director of Programs and Community Engagement.
Vinay Bhat’s autobiographical games collection *How I Became a Chess Grandmaster* (2023, 344 pages, Quality Chess U.K., paperback, $30) details his path and approach for rising through the levels up to GM. When first reading the book, the storytelling and game annotations reminded me of Yasser Seirawan's *Chess Duels: My Games with the World Champions* which I enjoyed greatly.

One topic covered that I don’t see covered much elsewhere in chess literature is how players’ chess can be influenced by other time commitments. For those who aren’t playing chess full-time, the time constraint imposed by other commitments such as school or work poses the question of what to study to make the most of it.

The games and anecdotes provided in the book are entertaining and provide a good look behind the scenes of the ups and downs experienced during Vinay’s chess career. For a sample of the games and annotations, one can check out Vinay’s interview with Chessbase India or download the book’s excerpt.

At the end of each chapter there is a learnings and progress section where Vinay provides a retrospective to summarize the games played during that specific period. Although engines and computer theory have advanced greatly in recent years, players can find these sections in the book useful if they have encountered a roadblock or are looking for ways to progress to the next level.

In my opinion, *How I Became a Chess Grandmaster* is an engaging and informative account of a player’s up and down journey from beginner to grandmaster that also covers the chess changes that occurred from balancing work commitments to becoming a full-time chess professional. At the end, Vinay talks about what made him move on from the professional chess scene and how that transition has gone so far.
Vitaley Michael Radaikin (1933-2023)

We are saddened to hear of the passing of Vitaley Michael Radaikin, already a long-time member of Mechanics’ Institute when I joined in 1972. The following is a remembrance and tribute to this colorful and engaging man, penned by his son Bruce. - FM Paul Whitehead.

San Francisco Chess Master Dies at 89.

Vitaley Radaikin, whose parents founded the beloved Cinderella Bakery in San Francisco in 1953, has passed away. Vitaley was a United States Chess Master who loved and excelled at chess from a very young age. He won the California Chess Championship at 14. The second place finisher was International Master George Koltanowski, the famous blindfold player who later became the San Francisco Chronicle chess columnist.

Vitaley had many chess victories, but perhaps was best known for his chess antics. In one tournament in the 1970s, Vitaley was in a frantic time scramble trying to win first place. He illegally moved his knight like a bishop and forked two major pieces, spurring an instant resignation. My father told me years later that it was an accidental move, but, realizing what had happened, he hurriedly decided to collect the first place trophy and prize money, and exited quickly. Before his opponent and the chess organizers realized what had happened, Vitaley was hours away from the venue. Because his opponent had resigned, the result stood. This became the famous “Radaikin Knight Move,” and for years Radaikin’s opponents were often more concerned with being cheated, and less concerned about their chess game. My father embraced the notoriety and used it as a tactic to help win games.

Vitaley had a full life. Born on an American Military Base in Shanghai in 1933, his Russian mother had married an American Marine based in China. With the invasion of the Imperial Japanese Army in August of 1937, Vitaley’s mother Alexandra fled with her 4-year-old son Vitaley to San Francisco. It is unclear what happened to Vitaley’s biological father, William Skelton.

His stepfather, Michael Radaikin, introduced him to the game of chess which became a life-long pursuit. He cherished his friends in the chess world, including International Master Walter Shipman, Grandmaster Peter Biyiasas, and speed chess phenom US Master Steve Brandwein. He was an avid player (lifetime master), and attended Mechanics’ Institute Chess Club in San Francisco for decades.

Vitaley was a Veteran of the Korean War (The Forgotten War). He attributes his survival of the war to the fact that he spoke fluent Russian. Attached to a special parachute unit, each unit had a Russian translator, and he believed that this enabled him to dodge the fate of many of his friends who did not return from the conflict.

Vitaley was a great husband, father, and friend. He was always trying to help make the people in his life around him better.

Vitaley was my father and my hero. I was lucky enough to be able to take a leave of absence from work to be with him at his home in San Francisco, where he passed away on June 13, 2023.
He really was one of a kind. He never followed the herd. He marched to the beat of his own drum, for which I respected him tremendously. He was driving his own car until the age of 89 and every time I called him on the phone, he was usually just coming down from the roof of his house working on repairs. “Dad! You’re too old to be on the roof!”

My father was also a philosopher and often quoted the likes of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson is quoted as writing something that was very much how my father lived his life:

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

Rest in peace, my friend. I will miss you!

Vitaley Radaikin ran for San Francisco District 6 Supervisor in the 1970's.

Vitaley scored an impressive draw against one of California's strongest players back in the day:

**Vitaley Radaikin - James Tarjan**
California Open, Fresno 1971.

The Chess Scuttlebutt

Links to some of the news that make up our world.

An injured dolphin named Chess has made a full recovery.

An AI-powered chess set actually moves the pieces using a “smart board.”

An ode to fathers and chess for Father’s Day.

FM Orest Popovych has passed away.

Marvel’s Nick Fury plays chess - with the board set up incorrectly.

Zimbabwe hosts a chess tournament with inmates, correctional officers, and professionals.

An investor mistakenly buys a replica of the chess board used in the Fischer vs Spassky match for a whopping $195,000 - and sues for his money back.

12-year old Master Tani Adewumi crushes Boston Celtics star Grant Williams - blindfolded.

IM Anna Zatonskih wins the 3rd Cairns Cup and gets her 1st GM Norm at the age of 44. She broke the record of oldest American to achieve that distinction - formerly held by former Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director IM John Donaldson.

Veteran GM James Tarjan wins the Larry Evans Memorial in Reno, edging out the phenomenal Rose Atwell at the finish line.

A website features the world’s smallest possible chess programs.

At the age of 13, FM Alice Lee is now the youngest U.S. woman to earn the International Master title.

Chiefs linebacker Drue Tranquill is officially the NFL’s best chess player.

Chess sets designed for accessibility and inclusiveness.

Central Park in New York City restores its “iconic” Chess and Checker House.

Yasser Seirawan is appointed spokesperson for the St Louis Chess Club.

It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia hilariously references the Carlsen/Niemann affair.

Maria Emelianova and the art of chess photography.

Stanford student IM Carissa Yip is profiled in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Mechanics’ Institute (and Chess Club) is profiled in the San Francisco Standard.

Hans Niemann’s lawsuit is dismissed in Missouri, but his lawyers plan to appeal in another state.

Recent Games

A selection of games from around the world that have caught our attention.
A trappy opening leads to a quick finish.
e6  5.0-0  a6  6.Bd3  Nc6  7.a3  d6

8.b4!?  g6?
[ 8...Nf6 ]
[ 8...Nge7 ]
9.bxc5  dxc5  10.e5±  Bg7  11.Re1  Nh6
15.Nf6+  Kh8  16.Be4  Bb7  17.Ng5
Bxf6  18.exf6  Nfd4  19.Nxh7!

(Diagram)

1-0

□ Niemann,Hans Moke 2695
■ Stearman,Josiah 2421
1000GM Las Vegas Summer Swiss 2023 (3)

An inticate game between two talents well known to the Mechanics' Institute.

Nc2+?  
[ 49...Kb2= ]  
[ 49...Kb3= ]

33.Rxc6!+- Qxc6 34.Bxf5 Rc7 35.Kxh3 Qa4 36.hxg5 Rc4 37.f4 Rxd4 38.Qxh5 Rd2 39.Qh7+ Kf8


(Diagram)
22.d5! exd5 23.cxd5 c5 24.Bg2 c4
25.Rc3 b5 26.Qf3 Nd6 27.Bf4 Qb6
28.Re3 Rc7 29.Be5 b4 30.Bd4 Qb5
31.Qe2 c3 32.Rc1 Qxe2 33.Rxe2 Nb5
34.Be5 Bd6 35.Bf6 Rf8 36.a4 cxb2
37.Rxc7+ Nxc7 38.Rc2 Re8 39.Rc6
Re1+ 40.Kxb2 Re2+ 41.Kb3 Rxf2
42.Bh3+ Kb7 43.Rxd6 Rf3+ 44.Kc4
Rxf3 45.Bd7 b3 46.Bc6+ Kb6
47.Bd4+ Ka5 48.Rd7 Na6 49.Rb7
1-0

White is in big trouble after only 11
moves. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
4.Bf4 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Rc1 c6 7.Nf3
Be6 8.Ng5 Bg4 9.Qb3 Nh5 10.Bxb8
Rxb8 11.cxd5?
[ 11.h3 ]

(Diagram)
A sharp game, with white accurate to the end.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4 Bb7 9.Nd6+ Bxd6
10.exd6 c5 11.c4 Nf6 12.f3 0-0
13.Bd3 e5 14.0-0 h6 15.Be3 Rc8
16.Bf5 Rc6 17.Qc1 Re8 18.Rd1 e4
19.f4 h5 20.Qc3 Qb6 21.Qd2 a5
22.b3 Ra8 23.Ba7 Ra6 24.Qf2 Rxd6
25.Bxc5 Rxd1+ 26.Rxd1 Qc7 27.Bd4
Ng4 28.Bxg4 hxg4 29.Be5 Qc6
30.Rd6 e3 31.Qe2 Qc5 32.Rxd7

11...e5! 12.h3 Bd7 13.Nxf7!? Rxf7
14.d6 b5 15.d5 c5 16.Bf2 Qh4
17.Nd1 c4 18.Rxc4 Qf6 19.0-0 Qxd6
23.Ne3 Qg6 24.Rc7 Qxe4 25.Rxa7
Bh6 26.Qc4 Qg6 27.Qc7 Re8 28.Qc2
Bf5 29.Qa4 Rxa7 30.Qxa7 Bxh3

Bf3 33.Rd8+ Kh7 34.Qd3+ Rg6
35.Bd4 e2 36.Bxc5 e1Q+ 37.Qf1 Qe4
38.Bf2 Qe7 39.Qd3 Be4 40.Qd4 Bf5
41.Rd5 Re6 42.Qd1 Kg6
[ 42...Kg6 43.Rxf5! Kxf5 44.Qd5++- ]
1-0


38.Rxf6 Qc2+ 39.Kh3 h6 40.Rf8+ Kh7 41.Qe8 1-0

47.Bg6!+- Be2 48.h5 d3 49.Kc1 Bxh5 50.Bxh5 Kxa2 51.Bf7 Ka3 52.Kd2 b5 53.Kxd3 Kb4 54.Ke4 Kc5 1-0


1-0
White attacks with nerve and ingenuity.
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3
Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a5 7.Re1 h6
8.Nbd2 0-0 9.h3 a4 10.Nf1 Bd7 11.d4
Bb6 12.Ng3 Re8 13.Re2 Qb8 14.Be3
exd4 15.Bxd4 Nxd4 16.cxd4 Bc6
17.e5 Nd5

A fantastic fight from beginning to end.
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Nc6 7.Qg4 g6
8.h4 h6 9.h5 g5 10.f4 Qa5 11.Bd2 f5
12.Qg3 g4 13.Qxg4 Nge7 14.Bd3
Qxc5 15.Ne2 Na5 16.Qf2 Qxf2+
17.Kxf2 Bd7 18.a4 Kf7 19.Rb1 b6
Ndb7 23.Nd4 Rbb8 24.Nb3 Nc4
25.Bxc4 dxc4 26.Nd4 Rc8 27.a5 b5
28.Rd1 Be8 29.Ne2 a6 30.Rd4 Rd8
31.Rad1 Rxd4 32.Rxd4 Bc6 33.Rd2
g3+ 34.Kg1 Kg8 35.Nd4 Rb8 36.Bd6
Be4 37.Bb4 Rd5 38.Kf1 Nd8 39.Ke1
Nc6 40.Ne2 Rxd2 41.Kxd2 Bxg2
42.Nxg3 Bf3 43.Kc3 Bd1 44.Kd2 Bg4
45.Ke3 Ke8 46.Kd2 Ne7 47.Bxe7
Kxe7 48.Kc1 Kb7 49.Kb2 Kc6 50.Ka2
Kd5 51.Ka3 Kc5 52.Kb2 Bd1 53.Kc1
Bf3 54.Kb2 b4 55.cxb4+ Kd4 56.c3+
Kd3 57.b5 axb5 58.a6 Kd2 59.a7 Bd5
60.Nxf5 exf5 61.e6 b4 62.e7 bxc3+...
12.Qe2

[ 12.d5! ]

12...Nc6+ 13.Bb5 0-0-0 14.Na4 Qxd4
Kxb7 18.Be3 Qe5 19.Rc1 Bh7 20.Kf2
g5 21.hxg5 hxg5 22.Nb5 gxf4
23.Rxc7+ Qxc7 24.Nxc7

0-1

35.Qxg7+! Rxg7 36.Nf6+ 1-0
When one thinks of New Orleans and chess, Paul Morphy comes immediately to mind. However, he is not the only great player from the Big Easy as Carlos Torre made it his home from ages 12 to 19. Mexico rightly considers Torre, born in 1904 in Merida, its first Grandmaster but it was in New Orleans that he developed into a strong player.

Torre made a huge leap forward when he moved to New York in 1924, his successes leading to a tour of Europe in 1925. There he turned in excellent performances at Baden-Baden, Marienbad, and Moscow, gaining in strength and experience event by event. He followed up this successful tour with several solid performances the following year.

Sadly, like Morphy, Torre's career was short-lived and he was never able to fully realize his potential, but he did leave a legacy. Today he is remembered as the first great Mexican player and for the opening sequence 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bg5 which bears his name. He used the Torre Attack to defeat Emanuel Lasker in a famous game remembered for its famous “windmill” combination.

Torre is also remembered as the first to play the Black Knights Tango (formerly the Mexican Defense) which begins 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6 and for authoring a small but thoughtful pamphlet (Development of Chess Ability). Any chess player would be proud of these accomplishments – Torre did it all before his 23rd birthday.

Carlos Torre stopped playing in tournaments in 1927 and it would be roughly three quarters of a century before a fitting tribute would be produced by Gabriel Velasco. Now a greatly enlarged second edition has been published thanks to the help of Taylor Kingston. This massive work features all of Torre's games with deep notes and a significant amount of biographical material, much of it never seen before. Even the text of the hard-to-find Development of Chess Ability is included making this the definitive book on Torre and an outstanding tribute to a player who deserves to be remembered.

Every chess player knows the endgame is important, but few study it carefully. In the past one could make the excuse that the few books devoted to the final phase of the game were primarily dry reference works. Today, this is no longer the case.
The past two decades have witnessed the appearance of a number of user-friendly books on the ending primarily dealing with the mastery of fundamental, need-to-know theoretical positions. These works develop part of the necessary skill set required of a good endgame player, but neglect the equally important ability to play general endgames with more pawns and pieces on the board. This is the subject addressed in Boroljub Zlatanovic’s *The Practical Endgame Bible: Guidelines for the Fundamentals of the Endgame*.

The Serbian International Master uses 188 model games to explore different endgame themes and to teach basic endgame principles. These model games, both older classics and newer examples, are carefully annotated with plenty of explanatory prose and only essential variations provided. This book will be especially useful for players rated 1800 to 2300.

Those looking for a solid and dependable repertoire against 1.d4 will find it in *The Nimzo and Bogo-Indian Revisited* by the Polish Grandmaster Lukasz Jarmula. This book, aimed at players in the 1800-2200 range, has been written for its target audience and is intentionally not as exhaustive as other works on the same openings (for example Dariusz Swiercz’s book on the Nimzo-Indian by the same publisher), but it definitely covers the essentials including an examination of White alternatives to 2.c4 like 2.Nf3 e6 3.e3, 3.Bg5 and 3.g3 as well as the London plus the Trompowsky and Jobava and Attacks. Black is offered two ways to play the Bogo-Indian after 4.Bd2, the solid 4...Bxd2+, and the more ambitious 4...c5.

*Supreme Chess Understanding: Statics and Dynamics* by the Polish 2600 player Wojiech Moranda is a book for ambitious students of the game. Many of the examples and exercises he gives will be challenging, in many cases extremely challenging, for all but the strongest of Grandmasters. In fact, it is very likely that most readers of this book, which deserves a wide audience, will struggle with it. That’s all right because they will definitely learn something by putting forth the effort and by Moranda’s solutions and careful explanations. The following is a case in point which deals with the subject of the price of avoiding getting one’s hands dirty. The following excerpt comes from pages 131-135 of the book and has been slightly abridged.

Modern Defense B06

**Kjartansson - Plat**

European Championship (Terme Catez) 2021

30. Ra1!

The only way to play for a win for White! In a moment Black is going to be outnumbered on the queenside, and therefore not in a position to cover his pawns over there anymore. White's last move does look dangerous but thanks to his control over the second rank, no further harm is going to be done. In other words, White has all the time in the world to outplay his opponent statically on the queenside (by snatching one pawn after the other) and Black's options of generating dynamic counterplay prove to be insufficient despite the momentary activity of his rook on d2.

No wonder Kjartansson did not go for the text though. 30. Ra1 is a type of a move that every sane, positionally inclined player rejects for starters as one that "asks for trouble." This is not an approach that I can universally recommend to anyone willing to improve at chess, as this way you would miss out on plenty of perfectly viable opportunities in your games. Being reckless and not paying attention to the possibilities of the opponent at all does not come into consideration either - the road to chess hell is paved with bodies of those who played like this. Because of this we have no other choice but to learn to strike a fine balance between attacking and defensive play, especially when facing obstacles on our way to convert an advantage.

At this point Moranda continues the conversation with suggestions on how a skilled coach could provide additional examples to develop this ability to find a middle way. He also provides an example of just how winning this position is for White provided he finds 30.Ra1!

30.Ra1! Rd2+ 31.Kc1 Bf6 32.Ra7 Bh4 33.Rxc7+ Kf8 34.Rf1 Rf2 35.Rxf2 Bxf2

Just when it seemed Black was finally getting his pawns on the e3 pawn, White consolidates effectively with...

36.Nd7+ Kg8 37.Nf6+ Kg7 38.Ng4.
Not only putting an end to Black’s dreams of restoring the material balance but also adding even more Black pawns (e5 or h6) to his stack.

The game actually continued:

30.Rd3 Bf8.

30...Bf6 31.Ra1 Bg5 32.Ra7 Rxd3 33.Bxd3 Be8! and if 34.Rxc7? then 34...Kd6! is given as a major improvement by Moranda.


*Supreme Chess Understanding: Statics and Dynamics* is highly recommended for ambitious players rated 2000 and higher.
Richard Hack
Tales from the Chess Café

The Post-Midsummer Day Festival

Big-time chess, baby. All play has meaning, as the historian says during the quotation at the end of this. On June 12th we learned that Stephen Curry and his entourage had visited Mechanics’ Institute Chess Club earlier that day. I wish I had seen Number 30 for the Warriors listening to part of Alex Robin's lecture and sitting with Paul Whitehead. I see now that Curry was born on March 14, the same day as Albert Einstein, and that he wears 30 like his father and teacher, Dell Curry, who played 16 years in the NBA and shot 40% from beyond the arc.

At the Café we went over Aaron's game. Then a puzzle from Ray where Black's ....Rd3 simplifies to a winning endgame. We saw his game with McCutcheon as White, Ray's first game after coming to Cal in '82.

Josiah Stearman recently lost to Hans Niemann. There was a GothamChess piece on Hans, said one member, adding, “Entertainer Levy Rozman covers games by lower-rated players, too.”

“He's the most successful streamer.”

“No, Nakamura.”

We worked through five puzzles, then watched an opening where Black moved the king bishop to d6, in front of the d7 pawn. “We've seen a lot of these in the last five years.”

The Cairns Cup was held again in St. Louis from June 3rd to 13th. The 9-round event that invites top international women players was decided after eight rounds, so we had that news at our Monday meeting. IM Anna Zatonskikh, the lowest-rated player in the tournament and one of two IMs against 7 grandmasters, won first prize going away, as she scored four wins and four draws to be the only undefeated player.

Their site said, “Day 8 was the most intense day in the... 3rd edition of the Cairns Cup. Anna Zatonskikh had the chance to draw the game by three-fold, but chose to continue her play without risk and it certainly paid off. Going into a knight versus bishop endgame, Anna was able to trade off to a winning king and pawn endgame that brought her not only the full point, but also a GM-norm. Zatonskikh secured the first place win with one round left, an impressive result considering she won three games with the Black pieces during the tournament.”

There was also some discussion of Dolly (Dorothy O.) Teasley, an 82-year-old WIM. It sounded like she was being nominated for membership in the New York Hall of Fame, but I couldn’t find that online. I played some of her games at ChessGames.com, and found these comments:

August 13-12 Premium Member GrahamClayton: “Newspaper journalist by profession, who wrote for the Evening Independent in St. Petersburg in the 1960’s.”
Strongest Force: “The Dolly I knew was a bank president or something close to it. She was like a big sister. We always played blitz and when she became annoyed she would start giving me advice on how I should improve my life.” :)

March 13-23 Caissanist: “Teasley was probably the third-best American woman in the late seventies and early eighties. From an article about the 1981 US Women's Championship: < Teasley has played in two previous women's Zonals and, in 1978, served as alternate on the Women's Olympiad team in Buenos Aires, scoring 7½-2½ to become the team's high scorer. Teasley is a high-ranking New York executive. In fact, her position as assistant vice president of Manufacturers Hanover Trust would have preempted participation in the Interzonals had she placed 2nd. While Teasley rarely enters tournaments, she frequently plays speed chess in Washington Square. She credits her imaginative style and tactical proficiency to the pastime and often admits to ‘coffeehouse’ tendencies. Alexander Alekhine is one of her favorite players, and she enjoys playing through his game collections.>”

Alexey was named to the Nebraska Chess Hall of Honor. She mentioned that John Watson and Michael Brooks are from Nebraska, among many others. “I would win almost every under-13 tournament.”

There was discussion of being hassled. How female players were once 5% of the U.S. total and are now up to 12%, mostly girls. “In the New York Scholastic,” Sophia said, “we're up to almost 38%.” But the percentage of adult women is still low. “At first it's OK homework; later the kids drop out of chess.”

“Women show up in force at our Chess Socials,” noted Paul.

“We're doing problems at chess camp today. We make them work in little groups so there's dialogue, and they have to write out their answers.”

At the June 26th gathering, Juliana of BernalChess mentioned her new online rating milestone. It occurred in a game where she felt sorry for her opponent because he didn't resign but played out the last three moves, a forced mate. Juliana: “I used to be mad when they resigned.”

“You played a beautiful game,” said Paul, “so let's play out the mate, too. That's not usual.”

We looked at the next game sent in. “I won it in the endgame,” said Merlin. “This is the one I was talking about.” At the top of the meeting he had responded to a question, “I was trying to play a French, and there were forks, and I guess I got lucky.”

Along the way Paul considerately pointed out better moves and said, “Sometimes a little tightening up in the opening allows your game to flourish.”

George sent in another Cow Opening. “It has the same moves with Black or White.”

Paul: “It was invented by Anna Cramling. By the way, George Kane had the idea of starting out the game with black's pawn on a6. And 1.a3 also confers a slight edge if White continues to play correctly.” He showed an example of it being used by White on the 3rd move. “The Hippo was played twice by Spassky against Petrosian in their first match. We don't have time to study all these openings people use, so one that fits many games is useful, but we never want it to get stale.”

George: “I think Anna's using it to get subscribers to her YouTube channel.”

Now we have 6.h4, h5.
Paul: “White is testing Black’s knights on g6 and b6.” He suggests 13...f5, but Black keeps holding back. At 25. Kf1, he remarks, “This isn’t an easy position for either side.” R+N vs. R+B. ....f6: “This is a canny move... The relative king positions are the telling thing here. And I went over it as comprehensively as I could before turning the engine on.” Which pretty much confirmed what was being said.

A real highlight that came near the end was Quinn’s collection of pictures from the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania in Vilnius, where three travelers played chess on an outdoor board with semi-lifesize pieces.

The following short selection is from Dutch historian Johan Huizinga’s book, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, the title being partly a response to the fashion of referring to homo sapiens as homo faber. The quotation’s parts come from the first 11 pages of the book:

“Play is older than culture... [and] human civilization has added no essential feature to the general idea of play. ...”

“In play there is something ‘at play’ which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the action...”

“[T]he fun of playing resists all analysis, all logical interpretation. ... No other modern language known to me has the exact equivalent of the English ‘fun.’ It is precisely this fun-element that characterizes the essence of play.

“We find play present everywhere as a well-defined quality of action which is different from ‘ordinary’ life. ...”

“The great archetypal activities of human society are all permeated with play from the start. ... It lies outside the antithesis of wisdom and folly. It is voluntary and free; it creates order. ... Play casts a spell over us. It is invested with the noblest qualities we are capable of perceiving in things: rhythm and harmony. Play is tense and seeks a solution.”

(Below is the aforementioned game featuring the Cow Opening. For more information about the Chess Café, and to join in our weekly conversation, go [here](#).)

**Cow Opening**

fitimdurmishi1975 (1531) - nomad16 (1628)

Online Game 2023

A New Puzzle in the Library

Every week or so Mechanics’ Institute's Head of Technical Services, Steven Dunlap, puts up a chess puzzle in the library for our members to solve.

This position is from *Botvinnik on the Endgame* (1985), by Mikhail Botvinnik. Steven notes that “Sometimes even rook endings may be won.” 1.Rf6! sets up the well-nigh impossible to meet threat of 2.Rd6 and 3.Rd8. Black cannot resist: 1…g3 2.Rd6 g2 3.Rd8+ Rxd8 4.exd8(Q)#. Or 1…Re8 2.Rd6 Rxe7 3.Rd8+ Re8 4.Rxe8#.

Seeking Scholastic Chess Coaches

Are you interested in joining the team at Mechanics’ Institute? The Institute is currently seeking Scholastic Chess Instructors for the upcoming school year. Qualified candidates should have a foundational knowledge of chess and should be familiar with or willing to learn chess instructional techniques. Candidates should also have a basic foundation in classroom management and conflict resolution strategies, particularly working with children. This is an in-person position and candidates must be able to commute to schools in San Francisco. If you’re interested follow the link below or reach out to our Chess Program Manager, Alex Robins, at arobins@milibrary.org. [Employment Opportunities | Mechanics' Institute (milibrary.org)]
Tony’s Teasers

1. O. Wurzburg, 1896.
White mates in 3 moves.

2. S. Loyd, 1890.
White mates in 3 moves.
Tournaments, Classes, and Events

Mechanics’ Institute offers a wide range of chess tournaments, classes, and special events. Our offerings include a monthly Chess Social, free classes for women and Mechanics’ Institute members, an online Chess Café, chess camps for adults and children, and much more.

You can find a list of ongoing and upcoming tournaments [here](#).

Offerings for adults and advanced players can be found [here](#).
Information about scholastic events, camps, and programming can be found [here](#).

Play chess in the oldest club in the United States!
Solutions

Tony's Teasers

1. O. Wurzburg, 1896. **1.Ne2!** Threatens **2.Qxg1#**. **1…Bh2** (1…Bf2 2.Qf1+! Kxf1 3.Bh3# is also very pretty) **2.Qh1+! 3.Bf3#**. However, **1…Be3+ 2.Kxe3 Na6 3.Qg3#** is rather prosaic.


Contact Us

The 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. Submit yours today at chessroom@milibrary.org

With more than 3,000 books and periodicals, Mechanics’ Institute boasts one of the largest chess book collections in the U.S.

You can now access our newsletter directly from the chess home page! [https://www.milibrary.org/chess](https://www.milibrary.org/chess)
WIM Ruth Haring Memorial Tuesday Night Marathon

Type: 7-round Swiss System tournament in 4 sections.

Time Control: G/120;d5

On-site registration before the first round: 5:30pm - 6:15pm

Rounds: every Tuesday at 6:30pm - 7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22.

Pre-round lecture at 5:30pm by FM Paul Whitehead.

Prizes & Sections: $2400 - based on 80 paid entries. 4 Sections:

- **2000+:** 1st $400, 2nd $300, 3rd $200, best u2200 $150
- **1600-1999:** 1st $300, 2nd $200, 3rd $100, best u1800 $80
- **1200-1599:** 1st $200, 2nd $100, 3rd $60, best u1400 $60
- **Under 1200:** 1st $150, 2nd $80, 3rd $60, best u1000 $60

More information: milibrary.org/chess

Questions? Email chessroom@milibrary.org

6:30pm
Tuesdays,
July 11 to August 22.

**7SS G/120;d5**

**Prize Fund:**
$2400 (based on 80 paid entries)

**Entry fee:** $65 for members, $95 for non-members

*Masks are optional in the chess club*
Mechanics’ Institute camps are an opportunity for beginner chess players to join and start a lifelong appreciation of the royal game of chess and play with other kids in the historic Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room!

Intermediate students will learn tactics, how to defend common opening traps, and review famous games.

Join us and start a lifelong journey through one of the world’s greatest games.

Find Out More and Register at:

milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess
For More Information Contact:
415-393-0110
chessroom@milibrary.org

Summer Camps
July 10-14 (Grades K-5)
July 17-21 (Grades 6-12)
July 24-28 (All Ages)
July 31-Aug 4 (All Ages) Aug 7-11 (All Ages)

All camps run from
9:30am-3:30pm

Cost: $500
(Pro-rated Half-Days Are Available)
Join the Chess Room for Chess Socials!
Free and encouraged for MI Members

5-6pm
First Fridays of the month:

August 4
September 1
October 6
November 3
December 1

Unwind from the week with fellow chess players. We'll have rousing game replays on the big screen, snacks, and lively conversation. Wine available for purchase in the Meeting Room provided before the CinemaLit program. Stick around for CinemaLit at 6pm!

Questions?
Contact chessroom@milibrary.org