Mechanics’ Institute chess coach **Quinn Ni** prepares to reset the wrongly set up chess board at Landing at Leidesdorff in downtown San Francisco.

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Recent Tournaments at Mechanics’ Institute

On November 18, Mechanics’ Institute hosted our monthly double-header of Scholastic Swiss in the morning, Quads in the afternoon.

The Quads had a nice turnout of 62 players competing in 11 sections, with Alex Shrauger (2030) taking clear first in the top quad with 2.5 points.

Complete results for the November Quads can be found here.

The monthly Scholastic Swiss continues to grow, and we had 24 participants in two sections.

Jimmy Sanchez (629) took clear first in the 500+ section with 3.5 points from four games. Tied for second through fourth with 3 points apiece were Maxim Dennis (726), Ian Kartiwa (827), and Dylan Wan (763). Rounding out the prize-winners on tie-breaks with two points was Miles Krepelka (835).

The u500 section was won by Benton Ayer (395) with a perfect 4-0 score. Tying for second through fourth with 3 points each were Mihir Somani (325), Jack Abrams (331), and Josh Kyauk (484). Michael Puterman (306) scored 2 points and took fifth place on tiebreaks.

Complete results for the November Scholastic Swiss can be found here.

Both the November Quads and the November Scholastic Swiss were directed by Local TD Arthur Liou assisted by Local TD Michael Hsu.

On Saturday, December 2, we hosted the 22nd Guthrie McClain Memorial, with 57 participants competing in four sections.

Jimmy Heiserman (2335) took clear first in the 2000+ section with a score of 3.5-.5. In clear second with 3 points was Jeremy Cawthon (1999). There was a 5-way tie for third place between Alex Shrauger (2073), Suyuan Gui (165), Yuvraj Sawhney (1916), Ranen Lardent (1905), and Kian Jamali (1902), all scoring 2.5 points.

Tapas Natraj (1683) scored a perfect 4-0 to take clear first in the 1600-1999 section, and a full point behind in a 5-way split for second and third were Prescott Yu (1720), Sriaditya Pendyala (1717), Liri Dancig-Perlman (1703), Rehaan Malhotra (1627), and Ansh Shrivastava (1527).

Tingshu Liu (1200) scored 3.5 points to take clear first in the 1200-1599 section, and Vidyuth Harish (1310) took clear second with 3 points. Tied for second and third with 2.5 points each were Tingshun Liu (1261) and Pardhu Kanaparthy (1241).

The u1200 section also had a clear winner in Anthony Khludov (998) who scored 3.5 points. In clear second with 3 points was John Pirone (736), and clear third with 2.5 points was Varad Korde (786).

Complete results for the 22nd Guthrie McClain Memorial can be found here.

The 22nd McClain Memorial was directed by Local TD Arthur Liou, assisted by Anthony Simich.
Guthrie "Mac" McClain (1910-1991) was a chess master and organizer, a Mechanics’ Institute trustee, and longtime editor of the California Chess Reporter.

The 2023 Winter TNM kicked off on November 7 and runs through December 19 with 84 players competing in four sections.

Information and current standings for the 2023 Winter TNM can be found [here](#).

The 2023 Winter TNM is co-directed by National Arbiter Scott Mason and International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.

**IM Elliott Winslow**

A selection of annotated games from rounds two through five of the Winter 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.
My "opening addiction" -- castling queenside in the Exchange Queen's Gambit. It's quite double-edged, and I might misplay here and there, but it's fun and leads to the occasional exceptional game (as in brilliancy prizes!). Also, this was my last game before what is probably RSV (I had my flu shot!) laid me down. Not my swan song!


[10.Bh4]

10...Re8 11.h3

Bf8 12.0-0-0

[12.g4]

[Stockfish prefers 12.0-0 -- bah!]

12...b5

[12...g6 13.g4 Bg7 14.Kb1 Kh8 15.g5 Ng8 16.gxh6 Nhx6 17.h4 Nf8 18.Rdg1 Bf5 19.h5 Bxd3 20.Qxd3 Kh7 21.hxg6+ Nhx6 22.Ng5+ Kg8 23.Nxf7 1-0 (28) Sachdev,T (2397)-Bandodkar,V IND-chT (Women) 11th

Rc8?!

[14...b4 15.Na4

A) 15...c5

A1) I was caught up on 16.Nxc5 Nxc5 17.dxc5 d4? (17...Rc8!= 18.Rhg1! g5!? ) 18.c6+-;

A2) 16.g5!± c4 17.Bf5;

B) 15...Ne4 ]

15.Rhg1?!±

[15.g5!+- Nh5 16.gxh6 Nxf4]
17.exf4 ]
15...b4

16.Na4?
[ Here Stockfish 16 goes wild: 16.g5!!
 bxc3 17.gxh6!! (17.gxf6 Nxf6
 18.Bxh6± = ) 17...Ne4 best try
18.Ng5+ Qb6 19.h7+ Kh8 20.Nxf7+ Kxh7 21.f3 Kg8 22.Nh6+ Kh8
23.fxe4 c5! 24.e5!± Crazy. gxh6
25.Bf5 Re7 26.Rg6 Rc6 27.e6 ]

16...c5 17.Nxc5
[ 17.dxc5 Bxc5= (17...g5!? 18.Bg3
 Qa5 19.Nd4 Nxc5 20.Nxc5 Bxc5
21Nb3 Qb6 22.Bf5 Rc6 23.Qd2= )]

17...Nxc5?!
[ 17...Bxc5 18.dxc5 Nxc5 19.Bf5
 b3!± ]

18.dxc5 Bxc5
[ 18...g5?!= ]

19.Qb3?!
[ 19.Qe2! d4 20.g5 hxg5 21.Nxg5
dxe3 22.fxe3± ]

19...Qb6
[ 19...g5! 20.Bh2 d4 21.Nxd4 Bxd4
22.exd4 a5!= 23.Be5 Bd5 24.Qa4

20.g5 hxg5 21.Rxg5 Ne4= /± 22.Bxe4
Rxe4!
[ 22...dxe4? 23.Rdg1! (23.Be5
Qe6!) 23...Bf8 24.Be5!+- Qh6

23.Rdg1

25.Bxg7 Bxg7 26.Rxg7+ Qxg7
27.Rxg7+ Kxg7 28.Qxb4 Ba6
29.Ne1!+- ]

24.Ne5!+- Rxe5
[ 24...Kg7 25.Qd1! (25.Qa4;
27.Nxg6 Kxg6= ) 25...Be7 26.Rf5!
Rxe5 27.Bxe5+ Kf8 28.Rf4+- ]

25.Bxe5 Kf8 26.R5g4
[ ♞26.Rc1 ]

26...Qe6 27.Bd4
[ 27.Rxb4! ]

27...Qf5+ 28.Ka1?!
[ 28.e4! dxe4 29.Rg5 ]

28...Bxd4
[ 28...Bd6 ]

(Diagram)
29. Qxb4+
   [ 29.Rxd4 a5 ]
   [ 29.exd4! ]
29...Ke8?
   [ 29...Bc5 30.Qxb7 Bd6+ ]
30. Rxd4
   [ 30.exd4! ]
30...Qxf2 31.Rdd1 Rc7 32.a3
   [ 32.Qd4 ]
   [ 32.h4 ]
32...Bc8 33.Qd6 Rb7 34.Qc6+ Ke7
35.Qc5+ Kd8 36.Qf8+ #11
   [ 36.Rxd5+! #6 ]
1-0

12. Rad1 Kh8 13. Kh1 Black played Kh8 then White played Kh1, but White has an idea to change the dynamics of the game, can you find the move? 13...Be6 14.c5!
Nxf3 15.cxd6 Qa5 16.Bxf3 Rad8 17.Na4

Nxf3 15.cxd6 Qa5 16.Bxf3 Rad8 17.Na4

Bh3
[ 20...Bh3 21.Nxb7 Qf5 22.Nxd8 Is just winning +5 ]


Kh8 25.Rxf3 Rxf3 26.exf3 Rxd6

(Diagram)
Black has the initiative 27.Rb8+

White wants to check the Black king to a square were he can attack later, h6 looks like a good candidate. 27...Kg7 28.Rb7+ Kh6 29.Rb1

White brings the rook back to protect checkmate 29...Qe3

White seems to be in trouble, perhaps there is a move to get out of this bind? 30.Qe4?!
Qf2 Threatens mate on the move 31.Qh4+ Kg7 32.Rb7+ Bd7

Where to go? G5 is off limits 34...Kh5 35.g4+

33.Qe7+ Kh6 34.Qf8+

Bxg4 36.fxg4+ Kxg4 37.Qxf2

(Diagram)
Mate and the end to a great game by Mr. Wu.
1-0
back here. 20.Nxd5 (20.Nb5?? double attack on d6! lol)

20.Nxd5 Ne4 My opponent gets the knight hop I thought I had! lol 21.f4

21...Rac8 22.f5 Nxg3 23.hxg3
[I rejected 23.Qxg3 Rc2 but didn’t consider 24.f6 Bf8 25.h4 Re4 26.Ne3 Re2 27.Nf5 g4 ]

23...Re2 24.Nc3 Re3 25.Kh2 Qc6

26.Qc2 d5 27.Qd2?
[I kicked myself so hard for not playing 27.Qf2 I decided to play it anyway. Rce8 28.f6 Bh8 (28...Bf8 29.Qf5 Qe6 30.Nxd5 Qxf5 31.Rxf5 Re2) 29.Qf5 Rd8 30.Qh3 Bxf6 31.Qxh6 Be7 32.Qh3 Qe6 33.Qxe6 fxe6]

27...Rce8 28.Qf2

28...b5 29.f6 Bf8
[29...b4? 30.fxe7 Rxe7 (30...bxc3? 31.Qxf7+ Kh7 32.g8Q+) 31.Nb1]

30.Qf5 Rd8 31.Rf3?
[31.Rd2]

31...Rxf3 32.gxf3
[I feared 32.Qxf3 b4 33.Ne2 Qc2]

32...b4 33.Ne2 Re8 34.Rd2 Re6
[better was 34...Qc4 35.Ng1 Re1 36.Nh3 (36.f4? Rxe1 37.Kxg1 Qc1+-+) 36...Re2+ 37.Rxe2 Qxe2+ 38.Kg1 Qe3+ 39.Kg2 Qxd4]

35.f4 Qa6
[35...Rxf6
A) 36.Qg4 Qe8 37.Qf3 (37.fxg5 h5 38.Qxh5 Rf2+ 39.Kg1 Qe3+) 37...Bd6 38.Kg2;
B) 36.Rc2 Qa4 37.b3 Rxf5 38.bxa4 Rf6+]

36.Nc1? very bad knight lol
[36.Ng1 Rxf6 37.Qxd5 gxf4 38.Qxf4 Rxf4 39.Rg2+ Kh7 40.Ne2 Rf1 41.Ng3 Bd6+]

36...Rxf6 37.Qxd5

[37.Qg4 Qc4 38.Ne2 Rg6 39.b3 Qc6 40.fxg5 Rgx5 41.Qf3]

37...Qf1
[37...gxg4 38.Rg2 fxg3+ 39.Rxg3+ Rg6 40.Rxg6+ Qxg6+]

38.Nd3 gxf4 39.gxf4

39...Rg6 40.Qh1 Qxh1+ 41.Kxh1 f6 42.f5?
[Best is 42.Rc2 Bd6 43.Rc6 Rg3 44.Rxd6 Rxd6 45.Rxf6=]
[I saw I could force the rooks off, so I got excited by the idea. It wasn't terrible to try 42.Rg2 Kf7 43.Rc2 (The problem with 43.Rxg6 Kxg6 44.Kg2 Kf5 45.Kf3 h5 is black's king is too active.)]

42...Rg5 43.Rg2?
[I should have given up on the unfounded expectation for black to stupidly take on g2 43.Rf2 Kf7 44.Nc5 Bd6 45.a3 a5 46Nb7 Rh5+ 47.Kg2 Bc7 48.Nc5]

43...Kf7 44.Rf2
[44.Rxg5?? fxg5 and black now has TWO connected passed pawns, not to mention the absurd weakness of his f5 pawn.]

44...Bd6 45.Nc5 Rg4 46.Ne6 h5 47.Rg2 Re4 48.Rg7+ Ke8 49.Rxa7 h4 50.Ra8+ Kf7 51.Kg2 Re3 52.Kf2 Rh3 53.b3 Rh2+ 54.Kg1 h3 55.Ra7+ Ke8 56.Ra8+ Kd7 57.Rd8+ Ke7!
[I thought I had him with 57...Kc6?? 58.Rxd6+ Kxd6 59.Kxh2+-]

58.Rh8 Rg2+ 59.Kf1 Rg3 60.Rh7+ Ke8 61.Rh8+ Kf7 62.Rh7+?
[62.Nc5 Bxc5 63.dxc5 Rxc3 64.Ke2 Rxc5 65.Rh7+ Ke8 66.Rxh3 Rxf5 67.Re3+ Kd7=]

62...Kg8 63.Rh6??
[63.Rh4 Rc3 64.Nc5 Rc1+ 65.Kf2 h2 66.Ne4 Bb8 67.Nxf6+ Kg7 68.Nd5 h1R 69.Rxh1 Rxh1 70.Nxb4 Rh3 71.Ke2 Kf6 and the pawns aren't]
quite strong enough. ]
63...Rc3  64.Kf2
[ 64.Rxf6  Rc1+  65.Ke2  h2  66.Rh6
  h1Q  67.Rxh1  Rxf1  68.Kd3  Rc1+- ]
64...h2  65.Kg2  Rc2+  66.Kh1  Rc1+
  67.Kg2  Rg1+
0-1

[Argo,Guy]
C33  1767
[Arivoli,Sadhana]
C54  1621
Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (2.9)  14.11.2023
[Winslow,Elliott]
It's worth noting that the whole Arivoli family was 45 minutes late; APEC
demonstrations have had an effect on travel on the Bay bridge and elsewhere.
1.e4  e5  2.Nf3  Nc6  3.Bc4  Bc5  4.c3
to
5.Bxf4  Qf6  6.Ne2  Bg4  7.Nbc3
[ 7.0-0!] 7...Bxe2  8.Nxe2  g5  9.Be3  0-0-0
10.Ng3  h5  11.Rf1  Qg6  12.Bxf7  Qg7
13.Be6+  Kb8  14.Rf7  Qg6  15.d5  Ne5

16.Bxa7+!?  Kxa7  17.Rxc7  Rh7
18.Rc3  Kb8  19.Qd4  Rc7  20.Ra3±
[ 20.Qb6!+- ]
20...Rc4??
[ 20...Rc5! ]
21.Qa7+  Kc7  22.Qa5+
1-0
0-0 10.a3 Bxd2 11.Bxd2 Bg4
12.h3 Bh5 13.g4 Bg6 14.Re1
Nb6 15.Bf1 Nxd4 16.Nxd4 Qxd4
17.Bc3 Qxd1 18.Raxd1
Black was unable to grind out a win: Rfe8 19.f3 f6 20.h4 h6 21.Kf2 c6
22.h5 Bf7 23.Bd3 Nd5 24.Bd2
Rxe1 25.Rxe1 Rd8 26.Bf5 Kf8
27.a4 b6 28.Be4 Ne7 29.Bf4 Nd5
30.Bd2 c5 31.Rc1 Nc7 32.Be3
Ne6 33.a5 Nd4 34.axb6 axb6
35.Ra1 Bd5 36.Bxd5 Rxd5
37.Ra8+ Kf7 38.Rg8 Ne6 39.Rb8
Rd6 40.Rb7+ Kf8 41.b4 cxb4
42.Bxb6 Rd3 43.Be3 Rb3 44.Rb6
Ke7 45.f4 Rb2+ 46.Kf3 b3
47.Ke4 Re3 48.Rxb3 Nc5+ 49.Kf3
Nxb3 50.Kxe2 Na5 51.Kf3 Nc6
52.Ke4 Ke6 53.Bc5 Ne7 54.Kf5+
Kf7 55.Bxe7 Kxe7 56.Kd5 Kf7
57.Kd6 Kg8 58.Ke7 Kh8 59.Kf8
Kg7 60.Kf7 Kh8 61.Kf8 Kh7
62.Kf7 Kh8 63.Kf8 ½-½ Caruana, F
(2766)-Carlsen, M (2859) Speed
Chess Chess.com INT blitz 2022 (2.24)
[6.0-0 seems best answered by Nxe4!
7.cxd4 d5!]
6...d5 Necessary to maintain balance
7.Bb5 Ne4 Same here; in fact Stockfish
favors 7...Ng8 (?!) over 7...Nd7 for 2nd
best, but they're both way up in the +=
world. 8.cxd4 Bb4+
[General concensus including a lot of
rapid and blitz games by Magnus,
have 8...Bb6 as the more sensible
retreat. 9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3 Bg4
(10...f5!? ) 11.h3 Bh5
(Diagram)
An extreme case of bishops vs. knights with a somewhat blocked center. Most of the grandmasters have found alternate futures, but one local Bay Area GM is still with us: **13.a3** The most commonly played.


**13...Be7! 14.Qc2** Stockfish follows rules and puts a rook on c1 or e1, with equality. And humans have prefered as well, scoringly better accordingly. But objectively it's all rather the same.

**14...Bb5N**

[14...a5!? preempts any Minority Attack ]

**15.Rfc1 Rc8 16.b4 Bd7 17.Nf1 b6 18.Ne3 c5!**

(Diagram)


[ 22...Bg4 ]

**23.Rxc1 Rc8 24.Ra1Bg4 25.Nxd4**

[ 25.Qxd4 Bxf3 26.gxf3 Rc1+! 27.Rxc1 Qg5+ 28.Kf1 Qxc1+ 29.Kg2 Qxa3 is nothing but "0.00"s ]

**25...Qxe5**

**26.Qe3** I don't know why this isn't at least as good as the many other moves; the e-pawn is insignificant, there is no longer a danger of back rank mate (for White!), and the kngith on d4 is
supported. 26...Qxe3 27.fxe3 Rc3
But now White comes away with a
passed pawn, not that it should sway
the needle off "draw." 28.Nb5 Rxe3
29.Nxa7 Bd7 some back rank
alleviation is called for 30.a4
[ 30.Rd1 Be8 31.Rd8 Kf8 32.Nc8
Rxa3 33.Nd6 Ke7 34.Rxe8+ Kxd6
these positions are optically nice but
draw, draw, draw. ]
30...Rb3 31.Nb5 Kf8 32.Nd6
"32.Nd7 Ke7 33.Ne5 Rb4 34.Nc3" on
Crompton's scoresheet ordinarily
wouldn't throw me off but I have the flu;
consultation with the Arivoli family set it
straight! 32...Ke7 33.Ne4 Rb4 34.Nc3
Rc4?! 35.Nd5+ Kd6 36.Nb6

Rc6?? This is like tripping over the one
rock on the Bonneville Salt Flats.
[ 36...Rd4□ is the only way to avoid
losing the bishop 37.Nxd7 Kxd7
38.a5 Kc6 39.a6 Rd8 Still drawn. ]
37.Rd1++- Kc7 38.Nxd7 Rd6 39.Rxd6
Kxd6 40.Nb6 Kc5 41.a5 Kb5 42.Nc4
Ka6 43.Kf2 f6 44.Kf3 Kb5 45.Kf4 g6
46.g4 Kc5 47.a6 Kc6 48.h4 Kc7
1-0

Black should be trying to dismantle
White's center as soon as possible and
this move doesn't help with that. Maybe
Black retreated the bishop preemptively
to prepare ...e5, not wanting their light-
squared bishop to be hanging. 18.b3
Securing the queenside pawns before
reorganizing my pieces. This is a
common prophylactic move and I played
it because I thought the tactics with B-
or Nxd4 then ...c5 or ...e5 worked out for
me, but I might be mistaken.

[18.Qe3 This seems better, just getting out of tactics on d-file. White can still play b3 next turn but at least with this move order there are no tactics to worry about.]

18...Rfe8 Black needs a pawn break otherwise Black's position is miserable but Black has spent too many turns doing nothing.

[18...Nxd4 Because White wasted a move on b3, Black had a chance to equalize here by grabbing d4-pawn then pinning the piece on d4-square with ...e5. 19.Bxd4 e5 20.Nxe5 Bxe5 21.Rxf8+ Qxf8 22.Qe3 Bxd4 23.Rxd4 Rxd4 24.Qxd4]

19.Qe3 A move I should've done earlier but now that I have been able to make this move, White's center is now sturdier. White wants Ne4 next, threatening Nxf6 to remove Black's annoying dark-squared bishop which applies lots of pressure to White's center. Black's dark-squared bishop is also a defender of Black's king and currently closing the f-file.

19...Rd7 Black might be trying to double rooks but Black's play is very inconsistent and wasting valuable time. Black gave up the center but needs to be quick to counter-attack.

[19...g5 This was the move I thought Black should've made. Black can maintain pressure on White's center and keep the strong dark-squared bishop. If Black went for this, I would try to re-route my c3-knight: Ne4-f2 and head for e5. If possible, I'd also like to swap my light-squared bishop for Black's and try to get something going against Black's king and the e6-pawn.]

20.Ne4 Bxe4 As ugly as this is, I think it's necessary. If Black didn't trade, White had Nxf6 and if queen recaptures, Ne5 discovered attack on Black queen, and if instead Black recaptures White's knight with ...gx6, then h6-pawn drops.

21.Qxe4 e5 22.d5 Nd4 This just loses tactically. 23.Bd3 g5 24.Nxd4 exd4 25.Qg6 Black can't stop material loss and Black's king is chronically weak.

25...Rf8

26.Bxd4 Rd6

[26...Bxd4 27.Qxh6+ Kg8 28.Bh7+

A) 28...Kh8 29.Bf5+ Kg8 30.Be6+ Rf7 31.Rxf7 Qxf7 32.Bxf7+
White just has a winning material advantage. (EW: 32.Rf1 is mate in );

B) 28...Qxh7 29.Rxf8#]

27.Qxh6+ Just going for simplification into a winning endgame. There is a forced mate here but I couldn't find it and didn't want to spend so much time looking for a very complicated checkmate that might not even be there when I'm 100% sure I can convert the reduced material endgame. EW: I don't know, it's pretty straightforward! And endgames are never100%, while MATE is. :-)

[27.Rde1! is mate in six: Qg7 28.Rxf6 Rxf6 29.Bxf6 Rx6 30.Re8+ Rf8 31.Rxf8+ Qxf8 32.Qh7#]

27...Kg8 28.Bxf6 Rxf6 29.Qxg5+ Qg7
30.\(Qxg7+\) \(Kxg7\) White is just up 3 pawns, with 2 passed pawns on the kingside. White still needs to play accurately but I find a great way to simplify. 31.\(c5\) All pieces but one rook for each side will remain after the forcing sequence. 31...\(Rxf1+\) 32.\(Rxf1\) \(Rxd5\) 33.\(cxb6\) \(Rxd3\) 34.\(bxa7\) \(Ra8\) 35.\(Ra4\) Black is just dead lost here. 37...\(Kf7\) 38.\(g4\) \(Ke7\) 39.\(Kg2\) \(Kd6\) 40.\(h4\) \(b5\) 41.\(Ra6\) \(b4\) 42.\(Kf3\) \(Kc5\) 43.\(Ke3\) \(Kb5\) 44.\(Ra4\) \(c5\) 45.\(Kd3\) \(c4+\) 46.\(Kc2\) \(c3\) 47.\(a3\) \(bxa3\) 48.\(Rxa3\) \(Kb6\) 49.\(Kxc3\) \(Kb7\) 50.\(h5\) \(Rc8+\) 51.\(Kd4\) \(Ka8\) 52.\(Ke5\) \(Rg8\) 53.\(Kf5\) \(Rf8+\) 54.\(Kg5\) \(Rg8+\) 55.\(Kh4\) \(Rf8\) 56.\(h6\) 1-0

The set of knights, for both sides, seem offset from the development of their natural squares but perhaps could yield greater outposts in the near future. 7.\(0-0\) \(Qc7\) 8.\(Re1\) 0-0 9.\(c3\) \(Ng6\) Not the greatest square for the N, +0.35 White gains a small initiative back. 10.\(a3\) \(Bd7\)

Ed Lewis and I were the only perfect scores already, but I was waylaid by flu/RSV, so Christophe Bambou was the one to wonder: "What is he *doing*??" 1.\(e4\) \(e6\) Surprise! No Pirc, Modern or KID today. 2.\(d3\) \(d5\) Black has already equalized (0.00) 3.\(Nd2\) \(c5\) 4.\(Ngf3\) \(Nc6\) 5.\(g3\) \(Bd6\) 6.\(Bg2\) \(Nge7\)

?? A cluster development concept of the minor pieces. I first noticed this type of development style in a GM Walter Browne game. The stage is set, how will White continue? 11.\(d4!\)±
White tries to collapse the center.  
11...cxd4  12.cxd4  Rac8 0.65  
Better was ...h6 or ...Qb6, after which ...  
Rc8 looks plausible; now White gains  
even more of an initiative.  
[(EW -- note 12...dxe4  13.Nxe4  Be7  
14.h4 gets pushed further back, what  
with h5 and Bf4 coming) ]  
13.e5  Be7  14.b4  

a5? 0.65 Now Black's knight is  
misplaced, where it is inactive and a bit  
of a hindrance. I thought I could reroute  
in time for the endgame.  
15.b5  Na7  
16.a4  Qc2  17.Ba3  Bxa3  18.Rxa3  

+1.70 White is better but redeveloping  
Ne7 seemed so natural.  
19.Bf1  b6  
20.Qa1  Qg6  Time to leave and find  
work elsewhere.  
21.Rc1  Nf5  22.Bd3  Qh6  

(+3.66) Black is in trouble positionally. 
White is on fire and coming. Can Black  
create a way out of this mess?  
23.Bxf5  
exf5  24.Rc3  

(Diagram)
Rxc3  25.Rxc3  Be6  26.Rc7  Nc8  
27.Qc3  f4  Black is trying to creep like a spider on the f-file. Hopefully White gets lost somewhere else on the board and doesn't see me sneaking towards his king.

And just like that, Black is trying to creep like a spider on the f-file. Hopefully White gets lost somewhere else on the board and doesn't see me sneaking towards his king.

28.h4?!  And just like that, Black is equal due to White's miscalculation.  
[(EW -- Stockfish has 28.Nf1 as +-- even, but I don't know why.) ]
28...fxg3!  29.fxg3  f6??  
[ 29...Qg6!  30.Nf1  f6± ]

33.exf6??  Yet again, Black is equal 0.00, this game has been a twist of ideas and choices.  
[ 33.Rf7!+- (EW -- the only, winning, move) ]
33...gx6  34.Qb7  

(Diagram)
Qd3?? 2.73 ?? White is now on top
[ 34...Bf5= ]
35.Nh2?+ -1.80 Now Black is on top!
35...Bf5?
[Black missed 35...Nd6!+]
Time is short for both.
36.Qf3!± 0.85

White is better
36...Qxf3+?!
[ 36...Nd6 37.Qxd3 Bxd3 38.Nhf3 Rd8 39.Kg1± ]
37.Nhxf3+- Re8 38.Kg1?
[ 38.d5!+- ]
38...Kg8?
[ 38...Ne7!± ]
47.Rc6 Be4 48.Kg3 Kg7 49.Rd6
[49.Nh4! Rf1 50.Nef3]
49...Nc3!? 50.Rxb6?!
[50.Nd2! Ne2+ 51.Kh3! (51.Kh4 Rf4+ 52.Kxh5?? Ng3#) 51...Bd5!!
52.Rd7+ Kg8 53.Kh4 Be6! 54.Rb7 Rf2±]
50...Nxa4?
[50...h4+!=]
51.Ra6+- Nc3

With 3 minutes on Black's clock, 34 seconds on White's clock. What a game on Board #1!! Thank you Christophe Bambou, till next time.
½-½

52.Rxa5?
[52.Ra7+! Kg8 53.b6 Ra8 54.Re7 somehow White weaves ... *something* ... with a win. But that a-
pawn sure looks dangerous! ]
52...Ne2+ 53.Kf2 Bxf3? Black is creating complications (but for himself!). Now king to e3 is key, but White reacted with low-time logic.
[53...Nxd4!=]
54.Ra7+?
[54.Ke3!+-]
54...Kg8 55.Nxf3
55...Nxd4= 56.Ra3 Nxb5 57.Rd3 Nc7
58.Kg3 Ne6 59.Rd6 Ng7

Business as usual for Dasika, who has a won game before move 20 without any heavy lifting. 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nc3 dxc4 4.e3 e5 5.d5 Na5 6.Qa4+ c6
10.0-0

[Predecessor: 12...Bg4 13.f3 Bf5

Qe7?!N

[Predecessor: 12...Bg4 13.f3 Bf5

IECG email 2008 ]

Bb7 18.Qa3 Qh4?!

[ 18...b4!? ]

19.Nc5?±

[ 19.Ng3+- ]

[ 19.f3+- ]

19...Bc8?

[ 19...e4! 20.g3 Qh5 21.Bb2□± else Black is winning b4! 22.Qa4
Qxc5 23.Rac1 Qb6 24.Rd5! Ne5!
25.Rxe5 Bxe5 26.Bxe5 White will be
hard pressed to make something of
that extra pawn. ]

20.Bb2 e4 21.g3 Qh3

[ 21...Qg4 22.Qa4 ]

22.Nxe4 Bb7 23.f3 b4 24.Qa4 h5
25.Qb5 Ba8 26.Qg5

1-0

Walder,Michael 1922
Admassu,Yonathan 1663

Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (3.8) 21.11.2023
[Stockfish 15/Tactical Analysis 4.6]

Walder plays the central attack nicely;
Admassu played a bit too avant-garde
and never found safety for his king,
which led to some sharp blows. 1.e4 d6
2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 This simple
move is a thorn in the side for Pirc
lovers. 4...c6 5.Qd2 b5 The problem is
that White isn't at all committed to
queenside castling. 6.Bd3 a6 1.25/12
[Black should play 6...Nbd7± 0.53/16 ]
7.Nge2 0.49/16

[ 7.Nf3± 1.25/12 ]

7...Nbd7±
8.a4N

8...b4 White is slightly better. 9.Nd1 a5
10.f3 e5 11.c3 0.25/18
[White should try 11.Nf2± 0.84/14 ]

11...d5 0.78/14
[ 11...Bg7= 0.25/18 remains equal. ]

12.Bh6 1.01/18

13...Qe7 2.45/16
[ 13...dxe4± 1.01/18 14.Nxe4 (14.Bxe4 Bb7±; 14.fxe4 bxc3 15.bxc3 exd4±) 14...Nxe4 15.Bxe4 (15.fxe4 bxc3 16.bxc3 exd4±) 15...Bb7 ]

14.0-0 Hoping for exd5. 14...Nb6 4.23/16
[ 14...dxe4 1.95/16 is a better defense. 15.fxe4 (15.Nxe4 Nxe4 16.fxe4 Bb7±) 15...Bb7 ]

15.f4+- dxe4 16.Nxe4
[Weaker is 16.Bxe4 Nxe4 17.Nxe4 exf4+- ]

16...exd4 17.Nxd4 Kd7
1.e4  e5  2.Nf3  Nc6  3.Bb5  a6  4.Ba4
Nf6  5.0-0  b5  6.Bb3  Be7  7.c3  d5
8.exd5  Nxd5  9.Re1  Qd6  10.d4  exd4
Be6  14.Bxe6  Qxe6  15.Qxe6  fxe6
16.Rxe6

18.Nxd6  Qxd6  19.Rad1  Re8

20.Nxc6!  Qc5+
[ 20...Kc7  21.cxb4 ]
21.Nd4  Kc7  22.f5  gxf5  23.Bxf5  bxc3
24.bxc3  Ba6  25.Bd3  Nbd5

26.Rxf6!
1-0

Oliver has been on a tear since discovering the Tuesday Night Marathon! Here he shows endgame maturity in grinding this bishop vs. knight ending.

Rd8?!
[ 16...Kf7!?! Surprising how the extra pawn here isn't so overwhelming. ]
17.Re1  Kf7  18.Bf4  c5  19.Na3  Rhe8
20.Nc2  Rd7  21.h3  Red8  22.Ne3  g6
Rd7  26.Rxe7+  Rxe7  27.Nxe7  Kxe7+-
28.f3?!  
[ 28.Bg5+- But a pawn up in a pawn ending? Of course! ]

28...Nd5± It's going to be a lot harder with a slippery knight still on the board.

29.Bg5+ Ke6 30.Kf2 c4 31.g4 Nb6 32.h4 Na4 33.Bc1 Ke5 34.Ke3 a5 35.f4+ Kd5 36.f5  

Ke5??  
[ 36...gxf5= 37.gxf5 Nc5!=  
( 37...Ke5?! 38.f6 Kxf6 39.Kd4 Ke6 40.b3 ) ]

37.fxg6 hxg6 38.h5 gxh5 39.gxh5 Nc5 40.h6 Kf6 41.Kd4 Nd3  

42.Be3?  
[ 42.Bd2 Nxb2 43.Kc5 mops up ]  
[ 42.Bg5+!? and b3 ]

42...Nxb2 43.Kc5  

b4?  
[ 43...Na4+! 44.Kd4 Nb2± is up to the edge -- but Black is holding. ]

44.cxb4 But not now! Nystrom keeps his eye on bishop and the right rook pawn vs. king... 44...Nd3+ 45.Kxc4 Nxb4 46.a3 Nc2 47.Bc1 Kg6 48.a4 Kh7 49.Kb5 Nd4+  

(Diagram)
Dasika is unfazed by the "Ed Lewis Shuffle" (sorry, I just saw a Mohammad Ali clip on YouTube) and lets it come to him.


White just has to be careful not to get forked! 50.Kc4 Ne6 51.Be3 Nc7 52.Kc5 Ne6+ 53.Ka5 Nc7+ 54.Kxa5 Nd5 55.Bg5 Nc3 56.Kb4 Nxa4 57.Kxa4

Kg6 58.Kb5 Kh7 59.Kc5 Kg6 60.Kd5 Kh7 61.Ke5 Kg6 62.Kf4 Kh7 63.Kg4 Kg6 64.Kh4 Kh7 65.Kh5 Kg8 66.Kg6 Kh8 67.Bf6+ 1-0

Bd6

[ 12...Be7 is mainly seen, at least with this move order. ]
[ 12...Qc7 used to be "it" and still, with transpositions, leads the pack with number of games. ]

13.Ne4 Nxe4 14.Qxe4 Nf6 15.Qe2 Qc7 One reason is that, with the B/e7, Black had 15...Qd5!? 16.Ne5 0-0-0

(Diagram)
17.Nd3?!N Why leave!
[Relevant: 17.g4 Kb8 18.Kb1 Ka8
19.f4 c5 20.dxc5 Bxc5 21.Be3 Bd6
Rhe8 25.Qf2 e5 26.fxe5 fxe5
27.Bc5 e4 28.Bxd6 Rxd6 29.Rfe1
Qd7 30.Qe2 Re7 31.Nc5 Qc6
32.Nxe4 Rxe4 33.Qxe4 Nc3+
34.bxc3 Qxe4 35.Rxe4 Rxd1+
36.Kb2 a6 37.Re7 Rg1 38.Rxg7
Kb8 39.c4 Rg3 40.c3 Rg1 41.c5
Re1 42.Rg6 Re4 43.Kc2 Ra4
44.Kd3 Rf4 45.Rxh6 Rxg4 46.Rh8+
Kc7 1-0 Muzychuk,M (2563)-Gunina,V
(2506) Hengshui IMSA blitz (Women)
2019 (21) ]
[and 17.f4! scores quite well, in the
70%+ range. ]
17...Kb8 18.Kb1 Ka8

19.g4N
[Predecessor: 19.c4 Qe7 20.f4 c5
21.Ba5 Rc8 22.dxc5 Bxc5 23.Bc3
Rhg8 24.Ne5 Bd6 25.Rd2 Bxe5
26.fxe5 Nd7 27.Rhd1 Nb8
½-½ Feco,J (1874)-Peter,J (1951)
SVK-chT2C 1213 Slovakia 2012 (10.
6) Nice trek -- but White is solidly
better. ]
19...Nd5 20.Qf3 b5

21.Rc1 Rd7 22.c4±

(Diagram)
Two weak pawns -- Black’s c-pawn is weaker than White’s d-pawn. 22...bxc4 23.Rxc4 Qb6 24.Nc5?! Bxc5 25.Rxc5 Rb8 26.b3 Rc8 27.Rhc1 f6?!

f5?!  
[ 31...Rd5= was objectively better. ]
32.gxf5?!  
[ 32.g5= ]
32...Nxf5 33.Bf2 Qd7 34.Qa6 Rc7 35.Qa5 Nxd4= 36.R5c4 Nf5

28.Qe2 Rd6 29.f4?  
[ 29.f3! and bring the bishop to g3: clear advantage. ]
29...Ne7?!
[ 29...Qd8 ]
30.Qc4?! Qb7 31.Be3

37.Qe1 Rd2 38.R4c2 Rxc2 39.Rxc2 Qd5?!

(Diagram)
40.Rd2 Qb5 41.Qxe6 Kb7±

44...Qa6? 45.Ka3? Extraneous.

45...Nd5= 46.Qd4 Rd7 47.Qc5 Qb6
48.Qf8 Qd8 49.Qc5 Qe7= 2 minutes on clock 50.Rxd5?? Ed goes off the rails. 50...cxd5+= 51.Qxe7 Rxe7

52.Bd4

Re4 53.Bxg7 Rxf4 54.Bxh6 Rh4
55.Kb2 Rxh5

[Relevant: 12...Nfd7 13.Nd5 Bxd5

13.Bxc4 bxc4

14.Bb6?N

[Supposedly 14.Nc5 is better, but 0-0 ( 14...Qc8 15.g5 Nh5 16.N5a4± although those knights don't look comfortable at all... ) 15.Kb1?! ( 15.N5a4 ) 15...Qc7 ( 15...Rb8 16.Nxa6 Rb7 17.Nc5 Rb8 18.Na6 draw anyone? ) 16.N5a4 Nd7 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.exd5 Rab8 19.Ka1 Qa5

Srinivasan is starting to become a constant threat -- if he survives the flu season! (His cough is even worse than mine!)}

White resigns.
0-1

14...Qc8  
[ 14...Qb8! 15.Na5 Nd7 16.Na4! Qc8? ]  

15.Na5 Nd7 16.Nd5 Bxd5 17.exd5 Bg5+

18.Be3??  
[ 18.Kb1= ]  


With this win, taking out his #1 rival, Walder went to clear first. 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.f3 c5 7.d5 e6 8.Nge2 Re8  
[ 8...h6= -0.06/30 9.Be3 exd5 10.cxd5 (10.Nxd5 Nxd5 11.Qxd5 Qa5+ 12.Bd2 Qd8= ) 10...Nbd7 ]  

9.Qd2± exd5 10.Nxd5 Nc6

(Diagram)
White is slightly better. 11.0-0-0
11...Be6 12.h4 -0.20/31
[Better is 12.Nef4± 0.84/34 ]
12...Bxd5= 13.exd5 Ne5 14.Nc3 a6 0.37/31
[ 14...Qd7= -0.14/35 ]
15.Re1 -0.16/33
[White should try 15.h5!± 0.37/31 ]
15...Qa5 16.Ne4 Qxd2+ 17.Nxd2 Nh5 (Diagram)

18.Ne4 f6
[ 18...Nxf3!? 19.gxf3 f5= ]
19.Bd2 Rad8 20.f4 -0.35/32
[White should play 20.Nxd6± 0.56/33 Rxd6 21.f4 ]
20...Ng4± There are threats... 21.Bd3?
-1.92/29

21...f5+ 22.Ng5 Nf2! Excellent horsemanship. 23.Ne6? -5.74/27
[23.Kc2 -1.87/32 nothing else works.]
Unrated players are wild cards. Are they "post-beginners"? Or maybe they're seasoned online players just getting into live play? In this case, Hector McKemey has 5 out of 5. But what do we make of this game?

1.e4  c6  2.d4  d5  3.f3  dxe4  4.fxe4  e5  5.Nf3  exd4  6.Bc4  Bg4??

7.Bxf7+!  Kxf7  8.Ng5+??
[ 8.Ne5+!+- ]
8...Ke8??
[ 8...Qxg5!+- ]
9.Qxg4+-  Be7  10.Qe6
[ 10.Ne6! ]
Very nice -- except for that glaring misstep on move eight! So we still don't know -- but 5-0 "speaks for itself" (H. Niemann).
1-0
Looks scary, but Black now equalized:
13...h5! 14.gxh5 Nhx5
[ 14...Rxh5 15.f4? Nc4!± ]
15.f4? Nc4± Black has the intitative.
16.Bxc4 Rxc4 17.Qf2 Nf6 -3.20
18.Rhg1

Nxe4

Bxc3! (EW: Flashy, and still winning, but lots of routine moves were significantly better.
[ 23...b4 for instance.) ]
24.bxc3 Rxc3+ 25.Kd1

(Diagram)

(EW: ?) 25...Bf3!! 26.Ke1 Rc1+
27.Rd1
(Diagram)
Qc3+?? Glitch in the Matrix.
[ 27...Rd5!! 28.Qxf3 Rdxd1+ 29.Kf2 Rxe1+ 30.Kxe1 Rd1+ 31.Kf2 Rxd3 32.Ne2 Ra2 33.Kg3 b4 34.Nd4 Ra3 ]
[EW: Even better says Stockfish (-6.65 vs. -4 something) is 27...Rxd1+!

28.Kxd1 Rd5+ 29.Bd4 (29.Ke1 Qe1+! 30.Nxc1 Rd1#) 29...Qc3 ]

Black resigns.
1-0


Last move in masters database. 10...Nc6 Developing and staying flexible. There isn't a great diagonal for my dark-squared bishop, so I'm learning towards fianchettoing the bishop for the long haul. 11.a4 This is very weakening while White still hasn't dealt with the backward d-pawn.

[11.b3 I like chipping Black's center to free the d-pawn. White needs to finish developing or deal with their backward d-pawn.]

11...g6
[11...Bxc2 I didn't want to force trades to free d1-square for White's rook. There is a plus though having a stronger grip on b3-square but I can't stop White's breaks so I want White to have to spend a turn moving their queen.]

12.Na3 White tries to develop. 12...a6 Stopping Nb5. I want to fianchetto my bishop then get castled. 13.Bxf5 Qxf5
[13...gxf5 This looked interesting but I didn't want to take the risk. My queenside pawn structure isn't fit for my king and White can open my queenside with b3.]

14.Qe2 Qd5 15.Rd1 Rd8 16.Nc2 My c4-pawn is a little loose and I'm no longer going to be able to keep White's d2-pawn restricted. I'm not able to hold back d3/d4 and stop a5 after ...Na5. My knights would become loose after White's queen attacks them or after White frees their dark-squared bishop then use it to attack my knights. 16...Bg7

Continuing development. 17.Ne3 Qd3 The only way for me to hold onto my pawn. 18.Qxd3 cxd3 Forced to hold onto pawn. 19.b3 White has good queenside square control. 19...0-0

Finishing developing then deciding what to do in the position. 20.Ba3 White finally activates their bishop. My d3-pawn is buying me space for the meantime but it can become a long-term weakness. 20...Nd5 Freeing my b7-pawn to move. I want ...b5 then ...b4 to soften the long-diagonal. 21.Bc5 b6 Gaining tempo on White's bishop to force it to a worse square. I'm also willing to
trade my d5-knight for Black's bishop for a potential long-term small plus. There could be positions in the future where my dark-squared bishop could be sacrificed or apply pressure on dark-squares uncontested.  

**22.Nxd5 bxc5**

I'm unsure where White should place their knight and how to progress. Black does have many weak squares on the queenside so White can have nice outposts like c4-square but what does progress for White look like? The b3-pawn could be a liability for White.  

**23.Nb6**

I don't get what the point of this knight jump was since it risks getting stranded and being forced to trade and damage White's pawn structure.  

**23...Na5**

I went for this to at least cause White to damage their pawn structure, though White's pawns won't be easy to attack. The way I saw my position, my d3-pawn is a long-term weakness that will be lost if I'm not proactive since White could get their king into the game. It'll be hard to make my dark-squared bishop effective but this goes in that direction as the position opens up. I won't be able to control the later opened b-file but my bishop will become a stronger piece as I try to open the position up and there is the possibility for a bishop sacrifice down the line for c3- and d2-pawns.  

**24.Rab1**

White is prepared for the opening of b-file, which control I can't take.  

**24...Rd6**

Forcing matters and going for a potential plan of a bishop sacrifice on c3-square later.  

**25.Nc4 Nxc4 26.bxc4 Rf6**

Going after c4-pawn.  

**27.Rb7 Rf4**

**28.Ra7 Rxc4**

I have to be conscious this rook lacks many squares but I think it's fine.  

**29.Rxa6 Rb8**

Grabbing the open-file. I need to play actively to survive this endgame. I'm open to a potential bishop sacrifice on c3-square then have my central pawns be menacing, with threats of advancement. I'm also considering double-attacking d2-pawn if White's knight moves. I want to push ...e5, ...e4, and then after ...Bxc3 to have connected passed pawns which might compensate for the piece.  

**30.g3**

Giving room for their king is a good idea.  

**30...e5**

White's knight isn't doing a great job and is lacking squares.  

**31.Ra1**

White abandons the defense of d2-pawn, wanting to support their passed a-pawn. With ...e4 deflecting White's knight and my bishop targeting d2-pawn, I could win the pawn, or make White waste time moving their rook again to defend.  

**31...e4**

White's knight is very ineffective.  

**32.Nh4**

White might be trying to get Ng2, Ne3 but this is too slow.  

**32...Bh6**

[ 32...Bxc3 33.Rc1 I didn't go for this because I didn't know what the follow-up was in this position. Rbb4 I didn't consider this move. 34.dxc3 ( 34.Rxc3 Rxc3 35.dxc3 Rb1+ 36.Kg2 d2 wins. ) 34...Rxc3 35.Rxc3 d2 36.Rd6 Rd4 queens. ]  

**33.f4 Bg7**

I think my best shot at not losing is to sacrifice my bishop for c3- and d2-pawns.  

[ 33...exf3 34.Nxf3 Rb2 35.Rd1 Re4 36.Rd6 c4 This looked no good to me. ]  

[ 33...e3 34.Rd6 I didn't know what to do from here. exd2 35.Rxd3 Bg7 36.Nf3 Bxc3 37.Nxd2 Black has a stronger minor piece for a slight edge. ]  

[ 33...Rb2 34.Ra8+ I dismissed my move because of the check which makes my bishop very bad. ]  

**34.Rd6 EW: "??" 34...Bxc3†**

[ 34...e3 EW: "!!" 35.Rxd3 exd2 (EW: -+) This wasn't on my radar since I didn't see the bishop fork. (EW: 36.Rxd2 Bxc3 when there's no pin because of ...Bd4+: 37.Rc2 ( 37.Rc1 Bd4+ ) 37...Bd4+ ) ]
35.dxc3 Rxc3 36.a5 White's a-pawn threatens to tie down my rook. I need to make my passed pawns work or I will lose. 36...Rc2 I wanted to stop White's king from invading Kg2, Ke3. Next, I want to march my c-pawn down the board to hopefully force White to sacrifice a rook or to tie down White's rooks.

[EW: Here's the computer's best line for Black: 36...Rcb3 37.Ng2 c4 38.Rc6 c3 39.Ne3 Rb1+ 40.Rxb1 Rxb1+ 41.Kf2 Rb2+ 42.Ke1! Re2+ 43.Kd1 Rxe3 44.Rxc3 Re2 45.Ra3 Rxe2 46.a6 e3 47.Rxd3 Ra2 48.Rxe3 Rxa6 with 3 vs. 2 in a rook ending, White should hold.]

37.Nf3 (EW: "?? -+") This leads to a worse endgame for White.

[37.a6 (EW: "? -+") c4 38.a7 Ra8 I'm not sure if this is winning but I thought it was my best try.]

[37.Ng2 (EW: "! = Only move") Re2 This is how I planned to deal with White's knight.]

37...exf3 The game could end in a draw but I think only Black is playing for a win, thanks to tactics. (EW: No, Black is winning.) 38.Rxd3 Rg2+ 39.Kh1

[39.Kf1 Rxa2 Threatening to skewer White's king and rook. 40.Kg1 White would've lost a pawn for nothing. EW: Looking further, Rbb2 41.Rxf3 Rbg2+ 42.Kf1 Ra2+ and Black will be two pawns up.]

39...Ra2 Taking advantage of back-rank issues to win a pawn. 40.Rdd1 Rbb2 41.Rxa2 Rxa2 I will be up a pawn.

42.Kg1 Rxa5 43.Kf2 Ra2+ EW: ? = [EW: 43...Kf8 44.Kxf3 Ke7 is bordering on won.]

44.Kxf3 Rc2 Stockfish can draw this but I'm not sure White's best defense. My plan is to get c-pawn to c2 then sacrifice it for a kingside pawn, but would also like to, if possible, have my king support the c-pawn. 45.h4 I don't like this since it allows me to freeze White's pawns and improve my king position, and now g3-pawn becomes a great pawn to win, exchanging my c-pawn to win White's g-pawn which would leave two useless split pawns. 45...f5 I don't know why this is so bad (EW: it's not :-) I can see White holding by keeping their king on 2nd rank, not allowing Black from getting to make any progress with c-pawn.

46.Rd5 c4 47.Rc5

[EW: The move played is fine, but 47.h5! reduces pawns and has Stockfish 16 declaring "0.00" on all replies.]

47...Kg7 48.Ke3 Rc3+ 49.Kf2 Kh6 50.Rc7 Rc1 51.Kf3 c3

Now White holds by keeping their king on 2nd and first rank so Black can't gain a tempo.

52.Ke3?? c2 53.Kd2 Rg1 54.Rc3 c1Q+ 55.Rxc1 Rxe3 This is easily winning. 56.Rh1 Rf3

57.Ke2 Rxf4 58.Ke3 Re4+ 59.Kf3 Kh5 60.Kg3 Rg4+

0-1
16.Bg5 f6 17.Bh4 g5 18.Bg3 Nxg3 19.hxg3 Rfc8 20.c4 Nf8 21.cxd5 exd5 22.Rc6 Qd7 23.Rac1 Rc7

This is an advantage, but it still teeters on drawn. 26...Kf7! 27.Kf1
[ 27.Rc7+ Ke6 Black has ...Nd7 if the rook tries to stay on the 7th, otherwise a perpetual with ...Kd6-e6 to Rf7-c7. ]
27...Ke7 28.Ke2 Ne6 29.Kd2 Kd7=
30.Rc2 Nc7 31.Kc3?!  
[ 31.Kd3 ]
[ 31.g4 ]
[ 31.Ng1 ]
31...Nb5+
[ 31...Rc8! 32.Kd3 Nb5 33.Rxc8 Kxc8 34.a4 Nd6+ Black's knight is

the first to make threats. ]
32.Kb4 Nd6

[ 33.g4=
[ 33.Ng1=]

33...g4
[ 33...h5! ]

34.a4?!
[ 34.Nb1 Ne4 35.f3 gxf3 36.gxf3 Nxg3 37.Nc3 a5+ 38.Kb3 Ke6 39.Rh2= ]
34...Rg8
[ 34...a5+ 35.Kb3 Rc8! ]
35Nb1 Rg5 36.Nc3= a6 37.Ne2 Nc4?!
[ 37...a5+ ]
38.Nf4= 

(Diagram)
Kd6??  39.Nxd5? Any other move was still a clear plus for White, [but 39.e4!+- puts it to bed. White wins a big pawn.]  
39...a5+?  
[ 39...Kxd5  40.Rxc4  Ke4! Between ...Rf5 and ...Kd3, Black has counterplay; White will have significant difficulty turning this into a win. As it went though... ]

40.Kb3?!
[As Brian noted in his submission of the moves, 40.Kxc4! Rxd5  41.Rb2 picks off the b-pawn with a routinely won two-pawns-up ending, pointing out that ...Rh5; Rb1 Rh2 Rg1 is a sort of "stalemate" of the rooks, and the king ending part is won.]

40...Kxd5  41.Rxc4  Rh5

(Diagram)

42.Kc3?
[Even here that maneuver works: 42.Rc1! Rh2  43.Rg1 f5  44.Kc3 h5 ( 44...Ke4  45.Kc4 Rh6  46.Kb5 Ke3  47.Rc1 Ke2  48.Rc2+ Kf1  49.d5 Rd6  50.Kc4 and after all that, Ke5 will do it.)  45.Kd3+- ]

42...Rh2?!
[ 42...Rh1! ]
[ 42...Rf5! ]

43.Kd3!

Rxg2
[ 43...f5!?  44.Rc1! Rxc2  45.Ke2 Rh2  46.Rb1 Kc6  47.Rb5 Rh1  48.Rxf5]
44.e4+-  Ke6  45.Rg1  46.d5  h5  
[ 46...Ke5!?  47.Rc8!  Re1+  48.Kd3  
Rd1+  49.Ke2  Rd4  50.Re8+  Kd6  
51.Re6+  Kc7  52.Ke3 ]  
47.Rc6+!  Ke7  48.Rxb6?!

[ 48.Rc7+
A)  48...Kd6  49.Rf7  Ke5  50.Re7+  
Kd6  51.Re6+  Kc5  52.Rxf6+-  
(52.Rc6+  Kb4  53.Rxf6+-);  
B) 48...Ke8  49.Kf4+-  as in the  
famous Capablanca-Tartakower 
game.]

48...Ra1  49.d6+?!  
h4  52.gxh4  Rf4±  53.Rb3  Rxe4  
54.Rg3  Rd4  55.h5  Rxd5  56.Rxg4  
Kf8 ]

49...Kd7!  
[ is a bit more complicated, but also  
drawn:  49...Ke6  50.d7+  Kxd7  
51.Rxf6  Raxa4 ]

50.Kd4  Rxa4+  51.Kd5  Rb4!=  

Another "only" move, but it works.  
52.Ra6□  Rb5+  53.Kd4  Re5  
Blockade: Black does "nothing" and  
there's no way in for White.  54.Rb6  Rg5  
55.Ra6  Rb5  56.Kc4  Re5  57.Kd4  Rb5  
58.Kc4  Re5  59.Kd4  Rg5  60.Kc4  Re5  
½=½
Ke4 0-1 Caruana,F (2801)-Carlsen,M (2877) Olympiad-41 Tromsoe 2014 (6.1)


8...e6 9.0-0-0 Bd6 10.Be3

10...Nbd7

(Diagram)
18.b4?!  
  [ 18.Kd2!= "(0.00)" ]
18...0-0-0?!  
  [ 18...a5!± ]
19.Bf3  
  [ 19.c3 gives White the worse side of even. ]
19...Nd5  
  [ Black should pick on either knight-pawn:  19...a5!? ]
  [ or 19...h5!? ]
  [ or just prepare for either with 19...Kc7 ]
20.a3= b5 21.Kb2 Rd6 22.Rc1?!  
  [ 22.Bxd5 is the computer's only "0.00" move. A human might have a preference for one or the other minor piece here. ]
22...Nf4  
  [ 22...Nb6!± ]
23.Rcd1 Kc7 24.Rh2? I had a hard time believing this move! And sure enough, the other (Nystrom Burke's) scoresheet says -- Ra2 :-) 
  [ 24.c3 when Black's advantage is insignificant. ]
24...Rhd8+-

(Diagram)

25.Be4 since the pawn is going anyway.  
  [ 25.c3 e5 26.Be4 exd4 27.Rxd4 Rxd4 28.cxd4+ when Black can stop for a kingside pawn move before taking. h5 ( 28...h6; 28...g6 ) ]
25...Rxd4 26.Rxd4 Rxd4 27.f3  
  [ 27.Bxh7 g6 28.h4 Kd6 29.h5 Ke7+- This is no Spassky-Fischer, first game 1972 (you all know that was a draw and RJF only threw it away later, right?). ]
27...g6 28.g5 Nh5 29.Kb3 Ng3 30.c3 Rd1 31.Rf2 Rh1 32.c4 Rxh3 33.Bd3 bxc4+ 34.Bxc4 Ne4 35.Rc2 Rxf3+ 36.Ka4 Rc3 37.Rxc3 Nxc3+ 38.Kb3 Ne4 39.Kc2 Nxe5 40.Kd3 Kd6 41.Ke3 e5 42.a4 Ne6 43.Ba6 f5 44.Bc4 h5 45.b5 0-1

Hector McKemey solidifies his lead, a perfect 5-0, a clear point ahead of Mitchell Walters (and they've already
played) with two rounds to go. In this
game Fisher trips himself up in the
exchanges, coming out with a trapped
bishop. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.e3 e6
4.Nf3 cxd4 5.exd4 d5 6.c5
I would have thought this premature, but
it's Stockfish's #1.
[ 6.Nc3 is the Caro Kann Panov-
Botvinnik system, or is it some
Queen's Gambit Semi-Tarrasch, or
(after ...Bb4) a generic NimzoIndian. If
you don't know what all those are,
don't worry, but do look them up! ]
6...Be7 7.Be2 0-0 8.0-0 Nc6 9.Nc3
b6 10.cxb6 Qxb6 11.Na4 Qc7 12.Bg5
15.Ne5?
[ 15.a3 ]
15...Bd7?!
[ 15...Nxe5 16.dxe5 Bd7† ]
16.Nxd7 Qxd7† 17.Bb5?! Rab8
[ 17...Rfc8 ]

(Diagram)
December 12th will mark the eighth anniversary of Steve Brandwein's death which was written about in the Mechanics' Chess Room Newsletter and Chess Life.

As good as these articles are they fail to convey what a unique and special person Steve was. The closest anyone has come to capturing him on the printed page is Jeremy Silman's tribute to his good friend which can be found in Silman's Chess Odyssey.

Steve was the last person to toot his own horn and to call him self-effacing would be a serious understatement. One literally had to pry details about his life and short-lived career as a tournament player out of him. What is known is that Steve grew up in New York City but left when his father Peter, an award-winning sports writer for the New York Times, died of a heart attack at the age of 45 in 1955.

The Brandwein family moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts. It was here Steve learned to play chess but he only first appeared on the USCF rating list in August of 1959 with a provisional rating of 1960. This was just about the time he was heading to Boston University.

There were few tournaments held in New England in the late 1950s and early 1960s so Steve's progress was slow and mostly based on study rather than practical play. He crossed 2000 on the December 1961 list (2055) and 2100 on the October 1963 list (2120).

It has long been known Steve faced Bobby Fischer twice and drew both games during the latter's 1964 transcontinental simul tour around North America. Sadly, it appeared both games had been lost but one of the scores turned up a few years ago and now a photograph of the two in action during that struggle has surfaced!

Steve was rated 2132 USCF when this game was played. He would earn his master's rating at the US Open in Boston later in the year and soon cross 2300 earning a place on the USCF list for the top 50 players in the country.

Two Knights C59

Fischer - Steve Brandwein
Fitchburg, Massachusetts (simul), March 2, 1964
Fischer reintroduced 9.Nh3 into Grandmaster play against Bisguier in the 1963 New York State Open where he met 9...Bc5 with 10.0–0. A few rounds later he varied against Radojcic with 10.d3, a move he gave an exclamation mark in My 60 Memorable Games. Present theory holds the two moves to be of equal value.

10...0–0 11.Nc3.
11.0–0 Bxh3 transposes to Fischer-Bisguier which continued 12.gxh3 Qd7 13.Bf3 Qxh3 14.Nd2 with White relying on his bishop pair for a small advantage.

11...Bxh3 12.gxh3 Qd7 13.Bg4.
This is Bobby's idea. By delaying castling, he is not forced to return the pawn as he was against Bisguier.

13...Qe7?!
Taking on g4 and meeting either recapture with ...f5 looks more natural.

14.0–0.
14.Qf3 and 14.Rg1 were both interesting alternatives. White's king may be better placed on f1 and it saves time compared to activating the rook with castling, followed by Kh1 and only then Rg1.

14...Nd5.
Here 14...Rad8, 14...Rab8 or 14...Nb7, planning to bring the knight back into the game on d6, were all worthy alternatives. With the text Black prepares ...f5 and clears the way to the kingside for his queen.

15.Bf3.
Another plan was Bd2, Qe2 and Rae1.

15...Nxc3 16.bxc3 Rac8?!
This looks slow. A more natural follow-up was 16...f5 with equal chances.

18...Nb7 and ...Nd6 would have been more consistent with Black's 16th move. The knight on a5 can be Black's Achilles' heel in the Two Knights and spending several tempi to bring it into play is often necessary.

19.Qe1 Nb7
19...f4 or placing a rook on e8 was needed to stop f4.

Even stronger is inserting 25.Bf3 and only after 25...Re6 (as 25...Rxc2 26.Bd1 Rb2 27.Bb3+ Kh7 28.Be5 Qg5 29.Qf3, with Rg1 looming, gives White a crushing attack.) 26.Be5 with a decisive advantage.

25...Qg5 26.Rae1 Qxg3 27.hxg3 Rxc2 28.Bd6 Rf7 29.g4 Rxc3.

30.Rxf5?
One mistake by Bobby and Steve escapes. Instead, 30.Re8+ Kh7 31.gxf5 is winning. White is threatening f6 and Be4+ and Black has no satisfactory answer.

30...Rxf5 31.gxf5 Nf7.

Black's knight is back in play and this makes all the difference.

32.Re8+ Kh7 33.Be5 Rc1+ 34.Kh2 Re1!


35.Re7 Bxd4 is the point behind Black's last move.

35...Nxe5 36.dxe5 Rx e5 37.Rxe5 Bc7 ½–½.

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**In Memoriam: Kenneth Hills (1961-2023)**

USCF Master Kenneth Hills of Danville, California, died November 13 at the age of 62.

Mechanics' Institute chess club members will remember Kenneth as a regular at events from the late 1990s to the early 2010s. It was at the end of this run that he won the 2012 Lovegrove Senior Championship ahead of International Master Walter Shipman. Kenneth was well-liked by all in the chess community and known for his good sportsmanship.

Born in Yokosuka, Japan, on a US naval base but raised in England from the age of three, Kenneth took advantage of his US citizenship to move to the United States and settle in California in the late 1990s. Previously, he had earned a BA (Honors) degree in Philosophy from the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom and an MBA from the Open University. Originally a software engineer, Kenneth later moved into digital marketing where he developed advanced skills in Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) and worked as an AI-Enabled Funnel Growth Marketer who specialized in utilizing cutting-edge technology to optimize and scale marketing funnel performance.

Chess was Kenneth's first love, but he had many other interests including golf, poker, and bridge. A talented blues guitarist, he was also a huge soccer fan with an affinity for both Brighton & Hove Albion and Liverpool.

Kenneth Hills will be missed by all who knew him.

- John Donaldson

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**Thanks!**

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Newsletter was started back in 2000 by former Chess Room Director IM John Donaldson, then taken over by his successor Abel Talamantez in 2018. The newsletter fell into my hands in early 2022 upon Abel's departure. Whereas John was “sole proprietor” – writing the entire content – Abel handed off some of the responsibilities to his staff: myself, GM Nick de Firmian, and International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.
I have followed Abel’s example, envisioning the Newsletter as a kind of community bulletin board, encouraging and seeking out contributions far and wide. With that said, and with the end of the year approaching, I’d like to acknowledge the people who have helped this past year in making the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Newsletter the informative and colorful publication that it is.

I’d like to start off by thanking Mechanics’ Institute Senior Director of Programs and Community Engagement Alyssa Stone, my editor. Many of the photographs you see every month were taken by her, and here is a piece she wrote about ensuring safe play at Mechanics’ Institute.

Next I’d like to thank IM Elliott Winslow, IM John Donaldson, Richard Hack, Steven Dunlap, and Tony Lama - they are the Newsletter’s regular contributors whose columns one sees every month. Elliott annotates games from the Tuesday Night Marathon, John reviews the latest chess books (and much more), Richard sums up the goings-on at the weekly Chess Cafe, Steven does the Library Puzzle, and Tony stumps us with his Teasers.

Here is the list of our some-time contributors over the past year, each with their unique take on the Royal Game. Find their contributions here. Thanks to all!

Ian Wessen, Henry Lien, Alexander Avedisian, Sara Beth Cohen, Alan Freberg, Danny Cao, Tilden Stadtmiller, IM Yian Liou, Bruce Radaikin, NM Kerry Lawless, Renate Otterbach, Heather Saunders Estes, Kristian Clemens, Quinn Ni.

Finally, I wish to thank Mechanics’ Institute Chess Program Manager and friend Alex Robins. Not only does he bear the burden of sharing an office with me, he has to endure other hardships - like schooling Stephen Curry when the NBA legend dropped into the club on June 12:

- FM Paul Whitehead
The Chess Scuttlebutt

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

Chess.com was hacked, and 800,000+ users' personal data was compromised.

Mechanics’ Institute’s Chess Cafe gets a shout-out in WIM Alexey Roots’s column for SparkChess.

A network of chess friends are helping Russians and Ukrainians flee the conflict.

Chess is being played via ham radio.

Chess Chief has been put out to stud for $5,000.

“Cultural factors“ might be influencing your chess moves.

The top chess players of all time based on the length of their articles in Wikipedia.

A new cheating scandal involves Nakamura, Kramnik, Nepomniatchi, and Carlsen.

GM Irina Krush has a great YouTube channel for players of all strengths.

The Vice President of the Ukrainian Chess Federation was killed in action.

FIDE announces a Gender Equality in Chess Index, ranking chess federations around the globe. Mongolia gets the highest mark, Denmark the lowest. The report in full can be found here.

Hans Niemann destroyed the field at the Peace Tournament in Zagreb, finishing with 8 points from 9 games and a performance rating of 2946.

Marin Chess Club is looking for coaches.

Vaishali Ramesbabu earns the GM title, joining her brother Praggnanandhaa to become the first brother/sister Grandmaster duo in history.

Finally, GM Fabiano Caruana wins the Sinquefield Cup - and the Grand Chess Tour.

Recent Games

A selection of games from around the world that have caught our attention.


20.g3 h6 21.Bd2 Re8 22.Rae1 Bb8 23.Re2 Qxb2


33. Nxe6! Re8 34. Qb5 1-0

Nobody applies pressure like Carlsen.

Diagram


(Diagram)

( DIAGRAM )

Rxf3! 30. gxf3 Rg3 31. Kh1 Rxf3 32. Rh2 Rf1+ 33. Qxf1 Bxf1 34. Rxf1 f3 35. e5 fxe5 36. Ne4 exd4 37. Nxd6 Qxd6 38. Rxf3 Qxb4 39. Rf2 Qe1+ 40. Kg2 Qe4 41. Kf1 Qxh4 42. Ke2 c5 43. Kd3 Kb7 44. Rf1 Qg4 45. Rf7 h4 46. Rf1 Qg6+ 47. Kd2 h3 0-1

( DIAGRAM )


( DIAGRAM )


( DIAGRAM )

Caruana,Fabiano 2795
Firouzja,Alireza 2777
GCT Saint Louis Rapid 2023 (1.5)

Caruana,Fabiano 2795
Firouzja,Alireza 2777
GCT Saint Louis Rapid 2023 (1.5)

Melkumyan,Hrant 2650
Bluebaum,Matthias 2670
ETCC Open 2023 (5.3) 15.11.2023


( DIAGRAM )

(Asserted)
Another problem-like finish. 1.e4 c5
Qc7 6.Bd3 Be7 7.0-0 Nf6 8.Re1 d6
9.Qe2 Nbd7 10.Kh1 0-0 11.f4 Nc5
15.fxe5 dxe5 16.Bg5 e4 17.Bc4 b5
Qxf6 21.Bd5 Rad8 22.Rad1 Re5 23.c4
bxc4 24.Bxc4 a5 25.Rxd8+ Qxd8
26.Rd1 Qg5 27.Qh5 Qe7

This was all preparation, but impressive
nevertheless. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4
Kxf7 7.Qd5+ Kg6 8.Qxc5 Nxe1

An entertaining draw.

12. Bxh6 gxh6 13.0-0-0 Re6?
   [ 13...Nc6 is apparently equal! ]
17. Qg4+ Kh8 18. Ng6+ Kg7 19. Nf8+ 1-0

Another crash-through on the king-side.

Nf8 19. Be4 Bxg5 20. hxg5 Ne7 21. g4
Nfg6 22. Bxg6 fxg6 23. Ne4 Rd8
24. Kg2 1-0

Precise play in a rook ending earns white
the full point.

24. Rd8+! Rxd8 25. Rd7+ Ke8 26. Re7+ Kf8
27. Rd7+ Ke8 28. Re7+ Kf8
29. Rd7+ ½-½

0-1

(Diagram)

(Diagram)


(Diagram)

(Diagram)

29.Rxd8+!
1-0

[Nihal Sarin] [Yu, Yangyi]
Alef Super Stars Rapid 2023 (2.2)


(Diagram)
Black is in trouble on move 13, lost on move 15, and destroyed utterly on move 19.


1-0

White crashes through with devastating effect.


(Diagram)
A wonderful game with competing bishops of opposite color attacks, decided by a pretty finishing tactic.

1. Nf3 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. e3 d5
4. b3 Bd6
5. Bb2 0-0
6. Nc3 c6
7. Be2 Re8
8. Qc2 dxc4
9. Bxc4 Nbd7
10. g4 b5
11. Bd3 Nc5
12. g5 Nxd3+
13. Qxd3 Nd5
14. Nxd5 cxd5
15. Rg1 b4
16. h4 Bc7
17. Ne5 Bxe5
18. Bxe5 Qb6
19. Qe2 Ba6
20. d3 Rac8
21. h5 d4
22. exd4 Rc3
23. Rd1 Qc6
24. Qe3 Rc8
25. g6 fxg6
26. hxg6 h6
27. d5 exd5
28. Qxa7 Bb7
29. Qd4 Rc1
30. Ke2 Rxd1
31. Rxd1 Qxg6
32. Kd2 Ra8
33. Ra1 Qg5+
34. Bf4 Qe7
35. Be5 Kh7
36. f4 Ra6
37. Qe3 Qh4
38. Qe2 d4
39. f5 Qg5+
40. Kc2 Qxf5

Rxa2+!!
49. Kxa2 Qa7+
50. Kb2 Qa3#

0-1
IM John Donaldson

Four New Books by Russell Enterprises
(www.russell-enterprises.com)

Technique in Chess, by Mark Dvoretsky with Artur Yusupov
176 pages $24.95 paperback

Mark Dvoretsky, arguably the most famous trainer in the history of chess, died in 2016 but new books bearing his name continue to appear.

The latest, Technique in Chess, prepared with the assistance of his best-known pupil, World Championship contender Artur Yusupov, draws from the vast number of training exercises Dvoretsky compiled during his lifetime. The first modern trainer, he was constantly looking for positions that would challenge his pupils, and continually refining the solutions based in part on input he received from many strong Grandmasters.

Technique in Chess starts with an explanatory section and is followed by 102 practice positions of increasing difficulty. The comments to the solutions are detailed, explaining not only the main line but also the supplementary side variations.

The phrase, “the rest is a matter of technique”, is quite common in chess annotations and yet converting a winning position can be one of the most difficult things to do in chess. This book will help you develop this essential skill. Players from 2000 on up will derive the most benefit from this book.

Amazing Artist – Dangerous Tactician, by Sofia Polgar
288 pages $34.95 paperback and $79.95 hardback

The story of the Polgar sisters is well-known and will continue to be for as long as chess is played. Three sisters were raised by parents with no chess background but powerful ideas on how to develop their children's full potential and how they did! Susan, the eldest daughter, became a grandmaster and Women's World Champion. Judit, the youngest, is the strongest woman to ever play chess and the only one to ever crack the world top ten and attain a FIDE rating over 2700.

The middle sister, Sofia, was also a tremendous player in her own right, a 2500 FIDE-rated International Master and member of two gold-medal winning Women's Olympiad Teams who turned in a 2879 performance at age 14 and was second in the 1994 World Junior. Unlike her sisters, she left the game at a much earlier age, effectively retiring in her mid-20s.

Amazing Artist – Dangerous Tactician is part autobiography, part art gallery, and part tactical textbook. Polgar traces her life story, gives ample evidence of what a talented painter she is and offers a number of her best efforts over the board – both complete games and fragments. The middle Polgar was always known as an excellent tactician and fine attacker, and it shows in the examples that appear here.

This book appears in two formats. The paperback edition is printed on high quality paper that allows the paintings and photos to really shine. The hardcover edition is limited to 200 numbered copies, each signed and dated by Sofia. Both formats are 7 by 10.
Amazing Artist – Dangerous Tactician is the rare chess book that should appeal to players of all strengths and would make a nice Christmas gift for the chess player in the family.

The London Files: Defanging the London System, by Vasilios Kotronias and Mikhail Ivanov 272 pages $29.95 paperback

When this reviewer first started playing during the Fischer boom the London System (1.d4 followed by Bf4) was considered to be an opening only used by senior citizens who appreciated how White's pieces and pawns were seemingly pre-selected to develop on certain squares (knights on f3 and d2, bishops on f4 and e2, d3 or c4 plus pawns on c3, d4, e3 and often h3). Even a decade later nothing had changed as evidenced and referenced by the name of an article on the London by the American FM John Hoggatt, who referred to it as “The Boring System.”

Fast forward to 2023 and times have changed! Top level players all the way up to Magnus Carlsen have employed the London and a number of books have appeared from White's point of view. The London appears frequently enough at all levels that even amateur players need be prepared to meet it. Fortunately, there are now several books out providing guidance on how to respond to the London.

The London Files: Defanging the London System by Vasilios Kotronias and Mikhail Ivanov is unusual in that it is a book on how to combat the London, but might be most useful to those who play it as White. This will depend to some extent on how wide the reader’s repertoire for meeting 1.d4 is.

Ivanov and Kotronias analyze four different systems against the London based on whether one meets 1.d4 and 2.c4 with the Kings Indian, Benoni, Nimzo/Queens Indian, or 1...d5. The latter was also covered in great detail in Kotronias’ books Fight 1.d4 with the Tarrach! (also by Russell Enterprises). Here the two authors update and expand on the earlier work.

One idea that caught this reviewer’s eye was the suggestion 7...e5!! (the two exclamation marks are by the authors) after 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4 Bg7 4.e3 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0 Nbd7 7.c4.
7...e5!! Normally this advance is prepared by ...Qe8 followed by ...e5 and ...Qe7 or ...e6, ...Qe7 and ...e5. 8.dxe5. If White declines the gift with Bg5 Black has saved an important tempo by playing ...e5 in one move or without having to waste a tempo with ...Qe8. Here after 8.Bg3 Ne4 Black is already better. 8...Ne4 9.Qc2 dxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Qxe4 Bf5 12.Qd5 Nd3.

Black has tremendous compensation for the pawn and is already slightly better.

If you are curious, this idea can be used with colors reversed: 1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 Bf5 4.0–0 e6 5.d3 Be7 6.Nbd2 c5 7.e4.

It works better when c4 or ...c5 has been played but can be even played when Black has not committed to the advance. One example is 6...h6 7.e4 dxe4 8.Ne5. In this position White has the additional option of 8.dxe4 Nxe4 9.Nh4 Nd6 10.Nxf5 exf5 11.c4 Na6 12.b4 with a nice initiative for the sacrificed pawn.

*The London Files: Defanging the London System* is a useful book for both those who have to meet the London and those who play it. Recommended for players 2000 on up.

*The Queen's Gambit Accepted: A Modern Counterattack in an Ancient Opening,* by Max Dlugy

352 pages $29.95 paperback

Grandmaster Max Dlugy's name may not be well-known to young players today, but it deserves to be. While still a teenager he won the 1985 World Junior Championship, made a +2 score in the Interzonal the same year and was a member of the 1986 US Olympiad team that took home bronze but nearly won gold. He was rated in the top 50 players in the world in 1989, but not long after started to play less frequently, concentrating his attention on a career in business and serving as USCF President from 1990 to 1993. He returned to the tournament arena in 2006, but understandably after the long break from the game not at the same level of play.

Unlike many of his contemporaries as a junior, Dlugy had a well-thought out and rock-solid opening repertoire that suited his positional style. Based on the openings his coach International Master Vitaly
Zaltsman played (1.d4 and 2.c4 as White, the Classical Sicilian and Queen's Gambit Accepted as Black), Dlugy knew his systems inside and out at a time long before computers would make opening preparation much easier.

Fast-forward to 2023 and Dlugy is primarily focusing his energies on coaching but still a formidable blitz player. Understandably, not being a professional player, he no longer plays the main lines with 1.d4 or the Sicilian, but his old love the Queen's Gambit Accepted is still his main weapon against 1.d4, 40 years after he first started playing it. Along with Yasser Seirawan, Dlugy is the great American specialist on this opening and more than qualified to write *The Queen's Gambit Accepted: A Modern Counterattack in an Ancient Opening*.

This massive book is roughly divided into two-thirds theory and one-third illustrative, well-annotated games. This is a repertoire book so sidelines like ...Bg4 or ...g6 in the QGA are not covered but everything Black needs to know is. Main lines are covered (1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5) but also sidelines (1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 b5 – his old trainer Zaltsman's invention).

Note that Dlugy's preferred move order is 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 a6. Delaying the development of Black's king knight takes the sting out of White setups based on an early e4, but transpositionally it runs into 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 when 2...a6 is pretty much a wasted move if White doesn't play 3.c4 (3.Bf4 and 3.Bg5 are two ways to test this). The author addresses this with a chapter on 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6.

Players rated over 2000 will find *The Queen's Gambit Accepted: A Modern Counterattack in an Ancient Opening* the best book on the subject currently available. Recommended.
Outdoor Chess Activation in San Francisco

Mechanics’ Institute is bringing chess to the community throughout San Francisco. Come and join us every week, boards and sets provided. All are welcome!

UN Plaza on Sundays from 11:00 am-2:00 pm
Landing at Leidesdorff on Tuesdays from 12:30-1:30 pm
Mechanics Monument Plaza on Thursdays from 12:00-1:00 pm

This page: partnering with San Francisco Rec and Park and San Francisco Parks Alliance at UN Plaza.
In collaboration with Downtown San Francisco Partnership, chess at Landing at Leidesdorff (above) and Mechanics Monument Plaza (below).
Poker Night Fundraiser at Alice Fong Yu Alternative School

The Mechanics’ Institute Scholastic Program was honored to have a Poker Night Fundraiser thrown for us by parents at Alice Fong Yu. Pictured above are the parent organizers Joanne Chang and Conor Moore alongside Chess Program Manager Alex Robins and Senior Director of Programs and Community Engagement Alyssa Stone. Joanne and Conor have worked tirelessly the past few years to ensure their chess club is a success and we were deeply honored to have them both raise money for us and put on a pretty great party.

The party itself was a great success - raising three thousand dollars for our scholastic program and a great opportunity to mix with the parents of our scholastic players. The money raised will help to ensure that our program continues to provide chess to children all across San Francisco, including providing weekly lessons at no cost to underprivileged youth.

The Poker Night aspect was a lot of fun as well. Alex played a straight draw aggressively and lost to the bottom pair on the first hand - Alex plans on sticking with chess for a while.

Thank you again to Joanne and Conor for putting on such a great event and for their endless support of our program.

- Alex Robins
Richard Hack

Tales from the Chess Cafe

Games in tournament rooms. Street games. Our leader announces we are all here “on the path to mastery.” Well, some of us anyway. (Not me, I’m afraid.) Kasparov Chess Academy: “Chess is a lifelong journey.” To what, might be a reasonable question.

On December 11, 1854, the first meeting of Mechanics’ Institute was held. On April 24, 1855, Mechanics’ Institute was incorporated.

GM Hikaru: “Everybody gets angry when they lose games of chess.” Yes, I’m always looking for words of wisdom and comfort, which are not always the same thing. In one of my two losses in the current TNM, I allowed my opponent to marshal an active 3-pawn center when I didn’t have to. In the other, he said postgame he thought it was going to be a draw, which I cast away in favor of trying to mate, but never could find the move to begin a winning sequence.

I see a list of ten “Hot Games” on the December 5 homepage of Chessgames.com. It’s fun to play through them; three of the ten are games by our former member Hans Niemann (one win and two draws).

At the Chess Cafe on November 13, we looked at Kyron Griffith vs. Josiah Stearman, a Sicilian that ended in victory for Black, and a game that was part of a 1000GM tournament in New York. The website 1000gm.org says: “Let’s Create Future Grandmasters: We are confident that a combination of great talent and participating in 30 tournaments annually can lead to achieving the title of grandmaster before entering college.” Pretty ambitious; but not everybody likes what they’re doing. We heard from adults working in student chess that some of these events have been scheduled in open conflict with important student team events like Amateur Team East, the Open at Foxwoods, Connecticut., and the National High School Championship.

Let’s hope it gets worked out.

We moved back to the grassroots with a Sicilian played by Ray Freeman on Telegraph Hill in Oakland. “They still have street chess there, while the activity at Telegraph and Haste in Berkeley was taken down.” The former location of the great Cody’s Books, 1956-2006. When 6. Be2 was played, Paul mentioned that it was the line Karpov used to play so well. Geller was Karpov’s second and gave him great opening ideas. Geller had a winning record against Fischer and many others, and there is some speculation that Bobby didn’t want to play against both Geller and Karpov in 1975. Back to this game: “9. h3 is weird.” Then: “At least you’re playing with ideas. That’s the most important thing here.” He also pointed out several bad moves in a row by White, beginning with 16. Bg5?! “White has no business here playing on the kingside.”

Next was the first-round TNM game by yours truly versus Gagik Babayan—“a hilarious guy who speaks a number of languages.” He has just returned to competition here after a long absence. The first four rounds have been hard on him, as well as others, but we look forward to him playing back into shape. Here, against a Sicilian Najdorf, he played 6. Bd3, “which is now being played by Grandmasters and has some cut-throat variations.”
It’s getting expensive to travel and play. One regular put out the figure of $600-800 for a two-person room, and said with airfare, a player can easily have to put up a thousand dollars to participate.

We heard more about Dolly Teasley, who played in the 1957 U.S. Girls and is said to focus on speed chess in Washington Square Park in New York, a city that used to have a women's chess club. “In 1893 a small group of women who were meeting at Eliza C. Foot’s apartment at 28 East 22nd St. in Manhattan to play chess decided to organize something more formal. This group... called itself the Women's Chess Association of America. . . . In 1906 The Women's Chess Club of New York, along with Isaac L. Rice, sponsored the 1st American women's chess congress [which took] place in the Hotel Martha Washington, where the club met. . . . In 1918 the club started meeting at the Manhattan Chess Club on Friday afternoons. . . . In the 1950s the women started meeting in the Marshall Club... The last published reference to the Women's Chess Club of New York, other than Julia Paul Harper's history in 1957, that I could locate was in Chess Review, May 1949.” (Chess.com)

We heard there are a lot of interesting stories about Sonja Graf-Stevenson (1908-1965). According to the World Chess Hall of Fame, she “was one of the best female chess players of the 1930s and the chief rival of Vera Menchik, who then reigned as Women's World Chess Champion. She learned to play chess during her childhood and later trained with Siegbert Tarrasch.”

After finishing the first Senior Women’s Championship in Berkeley recently, WFM Natalya Tsodikova recently said she would play again in the Tuesday Night Marathon at Mechanics’ Institute. After four of the seven rounds of the Winter TNM, she is tied for 4th through 8th in the 18-player top section.

On November 20, we opened with one of Paul’s memorable games from the 1983 CalChess Masters. “I only lost one game and finished clear third behind de Firmian and McCambridge, who tied for first. I beat Larry Christiansen, who did everything he could to beat me. I was content to let him make sure I wasn't getting into trouble.” Mike Walder: “Kind of a rope-a-dope.” That same year Christiansen tied with Korchnoi for first place in the U.S. Open. This was a d6 Sicilian with White playing 6. f4. “We were out of book at move 7. I just played moves that were good, and knew he wasn't outplaying me... I had to figure out how to make a fortress and did... He plays a cheapo here, but 30. Rd1 defends everything... I had to see all these cheapos—it was tiring!” By move 43 only White could play for a win. “It was bishops of opposite colors, but my technique was good.” 66. Rxa5 put White 3 pawns ahead, and it was 1-0 after move 76. Mike: “Nicely done.” Paul: “It was a nerve-wracking game with all those mating threats. I realized my good fortune and went for a win after that.” When Elliott suggested he check with a computer, Paul said he has never done that with this game: “I'll bet a dollar I didn't miss anything.”

He recalled that in 1973 the U.S. Junior Championship was played here at the Sheraton-Palace Hotel. “I realized that's where I wanted to be.” The 16-year-old Christiansen (rated 2390) won that tournament, a year after winning the Western High School Championship with a 6-0 score. “Christiansen, twice national high school chess champion and winner of the European Schilde international youth tournament, defeated John Peterson of San Jose, California, in 33 moves Thursday to assure the junior title. He scored six out of a possible seven points in the round robin tournament that began here a week ago.” (The New York Times, June 30, 1973, p. 40. The headline referred to him as a “Coast Boy.”)

We also followed Elliott’s win over Leonid Shamkovich in that same 1983 CalChess Masters. Very exciting! His opponent’s nickname was “Prince” because of his aristocratic bearing and manner of speech.
We saw one of Merlin's online correspondence games (one move per day). It was a 4-knight Scotch Game that wound up with two bishops and two rooks on each side; White had six pawns to Black's five, and trapped Black's queen rook with his two bishops.

Then we watched Walder vs. Kushan Tyagi, an expert from Chicago born in 1997. “I had a winning position but drew. [At least] I didn't blow up my position as usual with him.” Paul: “I've been playing c4 against these Kan and Taimanov positions . . . [Re Nd5:] Look at that crazy move.” The bishop at c6 was now attacked by Rc1. Mike said, “This is why I play chess.” Black's Ne5 was met with Bf1 (“more aggressive than Be2”). Elliott chimed in, “I live in constant fear of missing a brilliancy.”

On November 27, we looked at Walder-Admassu from the Winter TNM currently unfolding, with the last round scheduled for December 19. Mike: “White gets heavily centralized . . . The correct move here is Nf3 . . . but here I put him in a position I haven't seen before.” Paul: “Black is taking a maximalist role in this game.”

We then watched Paul's game against Paul Biyiasas at the Bagby tournament here in 1985, from the Masters Database at Lichess. “I keep trying to trade pieces. This game is quite funny here.” Someone asked why he didn't pin “your bishop to your rook.” There was no good answer. A pawn sac early led to a 40-move win. “You're down a pawn, but you have great practical chances. You have to be confident to play this.”

December 4 was quite an enjoyable session of the Chess Cafe. We watched at length a game by Ray Freeman versus a player identified as Rodrigo; what Quinn said was her first win, at the recent McClain Memorial; my draw with Thomas Gu in the fourth round of the TNM on December 3; and a contest in London on December 4 between 17-year-old Gukesh Dommaraju (often called Gukesh D), who became the youngest Indian player to become a Grandmaster, and 28-year-old French GM Jules Moussard. “You've got all the time in the world, and Rd2 is a mistake that loses the game.”

Ray on his game: “It wasn't a thing of beauty. I came back from an immediate blunder.” The game was an English Opening to which Black responded 1 . . . e5. Paul, after extensive analysis: “We're far afield, and it's not a forced variation.” Black had two rooks versus one, and a bishop versus bishop and knight (in a center with 4 pawns). One possible line ended with him down two exchanges: “It’s unusual to see that.” “Bd2 is crushing.” “What did you do here, Ray?” “I flagged. I was in desperate time trouble.” “You guys need to step up to the plate.”

Quinn: “I won my first game. I had a chance to win another game, but accidentally moved one square too far.” Oh, I know that one, don't you? Seeing the right move to make, but the hand suddenly betrays the mind. Luckily it doesn’t happen often. Paul: “In chess we get a chance to say, ‘I'll never do that again.’” Quinn laughs. Later says, “Just don't lose!”

Paul’s comments on a game: “You play with ideas. A lot of players don't have ideas. Plans, thoughts, reasoning.” Mike Walder: “Ideas, not just moves. Ideas before moves.”

Paul recalled a game in Tompkins Square. A friend named Israel introduced him to Judith Polgar when she was 10 or 12, and he was 25. “My star was descending, and hers was ascending.” Sometimes he is too self-critical. He and J.P. played a blitz game, and she won. Her attitude at the board was looking away, bored. Unfortunately, I see something similar at times in my opponent when I am losing. But I know I can’t expect all others to be courteous and respectful. Chess is a fight after all. Just like the struggle for existence and all the other lessons of life.
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.

“Boden's Mate” is the theme this week.
Black to move and win. From Chess Traveller’s Quiz Book (1993) by Julian Hodgson. Steven says: “A bishop pair can prove quite deadly enough that you do not need your Queen for checkmate.” The solution is 1...Qc3+!! 2.bxc3 Ba3. Checkmate!

-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)
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.

Register now for these special Fall and Spring holiday dates.

Find Out More and Register at:
milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess
415-393-0110
chessroom@milibrary.org

Winter Camps
Wednesday-Friday
December 27-29 (All Ages)
January 3-5 (All Ages)
Cost: $300

All camps run from 9:30am-3:30pm
(Pro-rated Half-Days Are Available)
Tony’s Teasers

1. A. Troitsky 1925
   White to play and draw.

2. T. Lama 2023
   Black to play and draw.
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.
Free Women's Online Chess Class by FIDE Trainer Sophie Adams

Coached by FIDE Trainer Sophie Adams, this class is for women and girls looking to develop their chess skills with a community of women. Knowledge of piece movements and mates is expected, but not required. Registration is needed so we may send the links for players to join.

Questions?
chessroom@milibrary.org / (415) 393-0110

Every Sunday on Zoom from 10 am to 12 pm

Register at milibrary.org/chess
Introduction to Chess: Free In-Person Class for Mechanics' Members

January 10 - February 14, 2024.

6 Classes

Wednesdays in the Chess Room

4th Floor
5 pm - 6 pm

Registration: milibrary.org/chess

Join us - beginner or intermediate player, and learn the fundamentals of the Royal Game with Mechanics' Institute Chess Room Coordinator, FIDE Master Paul Whitehead. From the basics: how the pieces move and capture, castling and en-passant; to more advanced strategy: checkmating patterns, how to think in the openings, middle-game strategy, and what to do in the endgame. The goal of the class is to open up a new world of fun and joy through the magic and beauty of chess!

chessroom@milibrary.org

(415) 393-0110 | 57 Post Street, San Francisco CA 94104
Information about scholastic events, camps, and programming can be found here.

Play chess in the oldest club in the United States!
# November & December Chess Tournaments

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Rounds</th>
<th>G/time</th>
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<td>2nd Irving Chernev Memorial</td>
<td>Saturday, November 4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>G30;d5</td>
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### January & February Tournaments

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

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<td>At Least Twenty-One Tournament</td>
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<td>1st Alla Kushnir Memorial</td>
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<td>d5</td>
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<td>d5</td>
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<td>2nd Falconer Memorial (FIDE-Rated)</td>
<td>Saturday &amp; Sunday, Feb 24 - 25</td>
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<td>$30</td>
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57 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 | chessroom@milibrary.org | 415.393.0110
Solutions

Tony's Teasers:

1. A. Troitsky, 1925. 1.e7+ Kxe7 2.b7 Rf3! 3.b8(Q) Rf8+ 4.Qxf8+ Kxf8. Now what? 5.Ba2 h3. Or 5...Ke7 6.Bc4 followed by Bf1 andBg2 draws. 6.Bg8! Intending Bh7 and then Be4. 6...h2 7.Bh7!! h1(Q). Stalemate!

2. T. Lama, 2023. 1...Bg8! Not 1...Bxg6? 2.Nxg6 c4 3.Nf4 c3 4.g4 c2 5.Ne2 wins. 2.Nxg8 c4. Incredibly, white now loses the knight to a Queen check no matter where he puts it, and the game turns into a theoretically drawn Q+P v Q ending, eg: 3.Ne7 c3 4.g7 c2 5.g8(Q) c1(Q)+ 6.Kf2. If 6.Kh2 Qc7+. 6...Qc5+ 7.Kf3 Qxe7. This is a tablebase draw.

Contact Us

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

We welcome any feedback, articles, or "Letter to the Editor" piece. 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
January 2024 CinemaLit: Chess in the Movies
Fridays at 6:00 pm (Cafe opens at 5:30 pm)

The renowned Mechanics' Institute Chess Club shares the fourth floor with CinemaLit, it seems only natural we run with the theme of "Chess in the Movies." Chess has appeared in films for a very long time, bringing suspense, intrigue, and humor to a game so seemingly quiet and contemplative. We're featuring three films that treat chess as metaphor, or as a means of personal and social transformation. And a fourth entry in our series is just plain fun, a classic caper film with a memorable (though unfinished) chess game.

Join us for Searching for Bobby Fischer (1993), Queen of Katwe (2016), The Thomas Crown Affair (1968), and Queen to Play: Jouveuse (2009). View the final film on Kanopy anytime, then join the salon discussion on Zoom. Your move!

Hosted by CinemaLit Curator Matthew Kennedy

Members FREE; Non-Members $10

Register here: milibrary.org/events
Join the Chess Room for Chess Socials!
Free and encouraged for MI Members

5-6pm
First Fridays of the month:

January 5
February 2
March 1
April 5
May 3
June 7

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