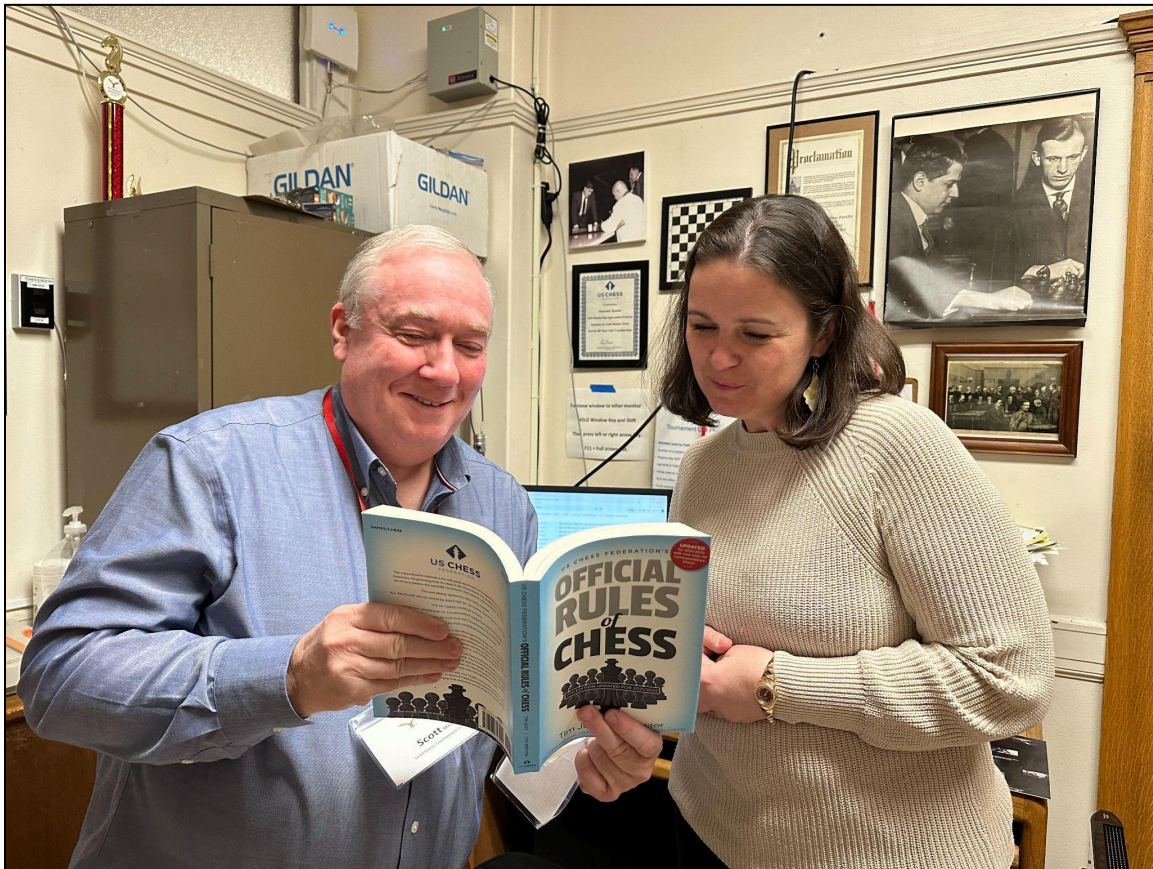


Chess Room Newsletter

Issue #1045 | January 13, 2024 | Gens Una Sumus!



Laying down the Law: In the Chess Room office, National Arbiter **Scott Mason** and International Arbiter **Judit Sztaray** get ready to make a ruling.

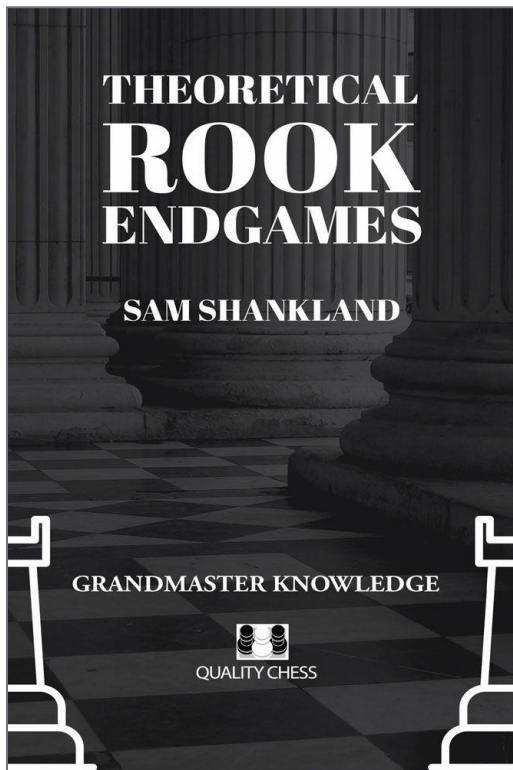
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Special Event with Grandmaster Sam Shankland

Tuesday, January 16 at 5:30 pm



Mechanics' Institute is proud to welcome GM Sam Shankland for a special lecture and book signing event in the Chess Room.

[Sam Shankland](#) is an American Chess Grandmaster and the 2018 US Chess Champion. He is a 10-year veteran on the US Olympic Team, a two-time Olympiad Gold Medalist (2014 and 2016, Silver Medalist in 2018), a former World U-18 co-champion (2008), and the winner of dozens of international tournaments across four continents. His peak FIDE rating of 2731 FIDE placed him at #21 in the world.

In addition to his playing career, he has worked as an analyst for World Champion Magnus Carlsen in preparation for the 2014 and 2016 World Championship matches. He has published four books as well as nine online opening database courses, and he is a co-owner and co-founder of [Killer Chess Training](#).



Onsite at Mechanics' Institute
Free and open for all!
milibrary.org/events

Recent Tournaments at Mechanics' Institute

On December 9, Mechanics' Institute hosted our monthly double-header of **Scholastic Swiss** in the morning, **Quads** in the afternoon.

The Quads had a nice turnout of 47 players competing in 11 sections, and **Arun Dixit** (2226) won the top Quad with 2.5 points.

Complete results for the December Quads can be found [here](#).

The monthly Scholastic Swiss had 30 participants in two sections.

Ian Kartiwa (818) took 1st place in the 500+ section with 3.5 points out of 4. Tied for 2nd through 4th places with 3 points each were **Keshav Raman** (963), **Arfan Pasha** (820), and **Maxim Dennis** (734). Taking 5th place on tie-breaks with 2 points was **Kepler McTiernan** (1177).

Keanu Chow (487) scored a perfect 4-0 to take clear 1st in the under 500 section. Tied for 2nd through 5th with 3 points apiece were **Josh Kayauk** (489), **Ben Huynh** (unr.), **Theodore Linehan** (311), and **Miles Lee** (205).

Complete results for the December Scholastic Swiss can be found [here](#).

Both the December Quads and the December Scholastic Swiss were directed by Local TD **Arthur Liou**, assisted by Local TD **Michael Hsu** and **Anthony Simich**.

There was a great turnout of 68 players competing in three sections for the **5th Annual John Donaldson Championship** (FIDE rated) held over the weekend of December 16-17.

Rishabh Chandrashekhar Gokhale (2182) took 1st in the 2000+ section with 3.5 points from four games. Tying for 2nd, 3rd, best under 2200, and best under 2000, each with 2.5 points, were **Neil Bhaduri** (2115), **Itai Reingold-Nutman** (1881), **Patrick Peijun Liu** (2257), **Rowen Oregel** (1882), **Daniel Videna** (1876), **Cailen Melville** (1866), and **Arjun Nathan** (1802).

Andrew Wu (1660) and **Mohammad Soltani** (1647) tied for 1st and 2nd in the 1600-1999 section with 3.5 points apiece. Tied for 3rd and the best under 1800 spot with 3 points each were **Zeno Kalonaris** (1615), **Frederick Dutter** (1900), and **Advit Kulkarni** (1610). The best under 1600 prize was split between **Avik Saha** (1397) and **Aaron Feng** (1421) with 2.5 points each.

Mechanics' Institute Trustee **Mike Hilliard** (1405) had a terrific result, scoring a perfect 4-0 to win the under 1600 section outright. In clear 2nd with 3.5 points was **Romeo Nehme** (1192). Tied for 3rd place and best under 1400 with 3 points apiece were **Angela Zixi Wang** (1025) and **Aashvi Sri Rangamreddy** (1359). Finally, **Ethan Wangchen Gao** (1132) scored 2.5 and took the best under 1400 prize.

Complete results for the 5th Annual John Donaldson Championship can be found [here](#).

The 5th Annual Donaldson was directed by National Arbiter **Scott Mason**.

The **2023 Winter Tuesday Night Marathon (TNM)** started on November 7, and finished up on December 19. We had 87 players who competed in four sections.

NM **Archit Dasika** (2218) won the 2000+ section convincingly with 6.5 points from 7 games, a full point and a half ahead of 2nd place finisher **Christophe Bambou** (2107). Tied for 3rd place and best under 2200 with 4.5 points each were **Edward Lewis** (1932) and WFM **Natalya Tsodikova** (2181).

Michael Walder (1922) won the 1600-1999 section with an unbeaten 6-1 performance, edging out **Wilson Wong** (1863) by half a point. In clear 3rd was **Sheng Jian** (1590) with 5 points. There was a six-way split for best under 1800 between **Nicolas T. Horde** (1526), **Guy Argo** (1767), **Fernando Toledo Guerrero** (1693), **Gregory Rousso** (1677), **Chunhui Gu** (1613), and **Hoa Long Tam** (1583), all scoring 4.5 points.

Hayes Alexander Marvin (1593) took clear 1st in the 1200-1599 section with a 6-1 score. There was a six-way tie for 2nd, 3rd, and best under 1400 between **Pratyush Hule** (1388), **Nicholas Morello** (1481), **Drew H. Clark** (1437), **Oliver Peter Nystrom Burke** (1276), and **Anubhav Maheshwari** (1274), all who scored 4.5 points.

Brett Fisher (unr.) and **Hector McKemey** (unr.) both scored 5.5 points, splitting 1st and 2nd places in the under 1200 section. **Mitchell Walters** (unr.) and **Andrew Singer** (987) tied for 3rd and best under 1000 with 5 points each.

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

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



Last round TNM action: NM **Archit Dasika** (left) on his way to victory over **Catalino Santos Jr.** The Mechanics' Institute is in the process of reinstating DGT boards for future broadcasts - stay tuned!

On January 6 we hosted the **23rd Bob Burger Memorial**, with 69 players competing in four sections.

Patrick Liu (2226) and **Sricharan Pullela** (2194) each scored 3-1 to share 1st and 2nd places in the 2000+ section. **Alex Shrauger** (2087) finished in clear 3rd with 2.5 points.

There was also a tie for 1st and 2nd in the 1600-1999 section between **Anthony Liu** (1894) and **Hayes Marvin** (1649), each scoring 3.5 points. Tied for 3rd were **Fredrick Dutter** (1900) and **Henry Lien** (1728).

Zack Schuster (1242) took clear 1st in the 1200-1599 section with 3.5 points. A half-point behind in a 4-way split for 2nd and 3rd places were **Romeo Nehme** (1409), **Rail Akhmetov** (1362), **Sahil Shivakumar** (1206), and **Loida Guo** (1045).

Neeraj Rao (1030) took clear 1st in the u1200 section, and was the only player in the tournament to score a perfect 4-0. In clear 2nd was **Kyan Agdassi** (unr.) with 3.5 points, followed by a 5-way split for 3rd with 3 points apiece between **Kevin Dolan** (1146), **Anthony Pivarunas** (1000), **Jimmy Sanchez** (814), **Youting Long** (678), and **Alex Vincent-Hill** (unr.)

Complete results for the 23rd Burger Memorial can be found [here](#).

The 23rd Burger Memorial was directed by Local TD **Arthur Liou**.



Mechanics' Institute Trustee
Robert "Bob" Burger (1931-2019)
was a chess master, author (*The Chess of Bobby Fischer*), and noted
problemist.

Bob Burger stories from Kenn Fong

The 23rd Bob Burger Memorial Tournament was held on Saturday, January 6 - our first tournament of 2024. In honor of Mr. Burger's enduring legacy with Mechanics' Institute, a brilliancy prize was offered in his name with the support of friend of the club Kenn Fong, a longtime chess player and community member.

Kenn shared stories of Bob that were read aloud before the tournament, which players reveled in and cheered for as they started their clocks.

Mechanics' Institute is proud to host tournaments in honor of chess players that have contributed greatly to the world of chess and to our club. We honor their legacy through our community of players and sharing their stories to lift up their memories.

Please look for [Bob's books](#) in the Mechanics' Institute Library. Besides *The Chess of Bobby Fischer* and *Grandmaster Chess*, look for copies of the *California Chess Reporter*, which was published around the corner at 244 Kearny Street, the home of California Municipal Bonds, Guthrie McClain's firm. It was the top bond rating company for California bonds.

He also ghost wrote *The Polish Prince*, singer Bobby Vinton's autobiography(!), and some fiction, but not under his own name.

Bob was the founding partner in the public relations and advertising agency, Burger, Felix, and Wood located in the Belli Building. I can only recall one client of his, Cara Mia brand, which still exists. I have a jar of Cara Mia Artichoke Hearts in my refrigerator.

Burger and McClain financed many events, including the 1972 US Junior Championship at the Palace Hotel, where I was the Assistant Tournament Director under Alan Benson.

Bob had a very large home in Berkeley. He had ten natural and adopted children.

Whenever World Champions or distinguished Grandmasters visited Mechanics' Institute, Bob opened his home to them. He had GM Svetozar Gligoric and GM Bent Larsen (both of whom were top ten players for decades), and World Champions Tigran Petrossian and Vasily Smyslov, all of whom I had a hand in arranging their Mechanics' Institute visits.

During former World Champion Vasily Smyslov's only Lone Pine appearance, I got into a tiny bit of trouble with Grandmaster Isaac Kashdan, who was Tournament Director.

When Smyslov drew his final round game with Los Angeles GM Larry Christiansen, he secured a tie for second place. I met him at the wall charts and whispered my congratulations. He smiled. Then I asked him, "Dollars or Rubles?"

Our laughter got us in trouble with TD Isaac Kashdan, who theatrically shushed us both!

By the way, Smyslov used his money to buy and import an American car!

Later, during the visit to Bob's home, Smyslov found an old piano in Bob's basement rec room. A talented pianist but also a concert operatic baritone, Smyslov began playing and singing. Bob returned home from work to find that, one-by-one, all ten of his children were sitting around the maestro, silently enchanted!

There is an important game between [Bobby Fischer and Bob during a simul](#), and the game is a terrific fighting game. At the end when Fischer resigned, Bob, without looking, raised his hand behind his head and surprisingly the owner of Harrington's Pub shoved a twenty dollar bill into it!

Here are a selection of games submitted for the brilliancy prize. The entries were judged by IM John Donaldson. Notes are by the winners. Congratulations to Hayes Marvin, who took the prize with this sparkling miniature:

Tingxiun Liu (1408) - Hayes Marvin (1649), 23rd Bob Burger Memorial, 2024.

"I submitted this game because of the move 8...Ng4! It is a brilliant move because it targets the f2 square and tempts my opponent to capture, opening up the h-file with possibilities for mate on h2."

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nc6 4.Nxc6 dxc6 5.Nc3 Bc5 6.Be2 h5 7.h3 Qd4 8.0-0 Ng4!



9.hxg4 hxg4 10.Bxg4 Qe5 11.g3 Qxg3# 0-1.

Sam Sloan (1900) - John Chan (1517), 23rd Bob Burger Memorial, 2024.

1.g4. "This was the first time I played against the Grob in a tournament." **1...d5 2.Bg2 Bxg4 3.c4 Be6 4.Qb3.** "Pressuring d5 and b7." **4...Bc8 5.cxd5 Nf6 6.Nc3 a6 7.e4 Nbd7 8.d4 g6 9.e5 Nh5 10.Be3 Bg7 11.Nge2 Rb8 12.0-0 b5 13.e6 fxe6 14.dxe6 Ndf6 15.Bc6+ Kf8 16.Rad1 Qd6.** "Trying to attack the king-side." **17.d5 Ng4 18.Ng3 Nhf6 19.Kg2 h5 20.h3 h4 21.hxg4 h3+ 22.Kh1.** "White has problems with his king." **22...Bxe6 23.dxe6 Qxc6+ 24.f3 Nxg4 25.Bd4 Bxd4 26.Rxd4 Nf6 27.Qc2 Kg7 28.Rg1 Qxf3+ 29.Kh2 Rbf8.** "Mr. Sloan had one minute left." **30.Nce4 Ng4# 0-1.**

Rail Akhmetov (1362) - **Colin Shober** (1214), 23rd Bob Burger Memorial, 2024.

"In this game, feeling tired from the previous round, I played in my naturally aggressive (but also pretty careless) style, leading to an early loss of a knight. Despite this setback and a daunting computer evaluation of minus 5, I didn't give up. I pushed my initial aggressive ideas and with precise play turned a losing position into a win. My opponent had chances to draw by returning material but was psychologically unprepared to give up their substantial lead.

This was my first time at the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club, and the experience has been great."

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Be3 0-0 6.Bd3 Bg4 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 Nbd7 9.g4 c5 10.h4 Qb6 11.Na4 Qb4+ 12.c3 Qxa4 13.h5 cxd4 14.Bxd4 Nc5 15.Bxf6 Nxd3+ 16.Qxd3 Bxf6 17.hxg6 fxg6 18.f4 Qc6 19.0-0-0 b5 20.g5 Bg7 21.f5 b4 22.Qh3 gxf5 23.Qxh7+ Kf7 24.exf5 Rh8 25.Qg6+ Kf8 26.f6 exf6 27.gxf6 Qd7 28.fxg7+ Qxg7 29.Rdf1+ Kg8 30.Qe6+ 1-0.



A scene from the Burger.

The [2024 New Year Tuesday Night Marathon](#) kicked off on January 9, and runs until February 20. This FIDE rated 7-round Swiss has 71 players competing in four sections.

The 2024 New Year TNM is co-directed by National Arbiter **Scott Mason** and International Arbiter **Judit Sztaray**.

IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from rounds six and seven of the 2023 Winter TNM, and round one of the 2024 New Year 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](#).

 **Dasika,Archit** **E11**
 **Srinivasan,Sivavishnu** **2218**
 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.1) **1962**
 12.12.2023
[Winslow,Elliott]

Archit Dasika locked up 1st with this interesting win against young Sivavishnu Srinivasan in a complicated and topical Catalan/Bogoinian. I get some credit for the Dasika's early win by letting myself get paired the previous round and then forfeiting, sicker than I realized. Don't believe those home Covid antigen tests! As Round 6 was being played I got a lab test back: "Covid Detected !" I just hope nobody got sick from me, let alone as sick as I was. That forfeit meant that Christophe Bambou didn't play Dasika, and who knows what would happen in *that* game. Bambou had two already-requested byes for the last two rounds, so that was that. **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5** Well, except that if Srinivasan could pull off an upset, then the two of them would be tied for 1st-2nd! Tall order though. Let's see... **4.Nf3 Bb4+** There it is, the Bogo spin on the Catalan. **5.Bd2** This does at least "put the question" to the bishop.

[But there's nothing wrong with 5.Nbd2]

5...a5!? This puts the Bogo stamp on the game. It's noteworthy that Carlsen, who has played the bishop check a dozen or so times, only played this once. (But the highest rated player ever has also played 5...dxc4 and 5...Be7 some 30-plus times as well.) Note also that if you use Chessbase, the Mega Database, and have "Top Games" flagged, this move scores 50.0% over 686 games (!) -- so it's a reputable line. If a bit of a mad line!

[The two bishop retreats (leaving the B/ d2 ever so slightly misplaced) have

been the main moves, when 5...Be7 , bringing the game closer to Catalan territory, dominates frequency-wise if a bit of a lesser score.]
 [5...Bd6!?]

6.Bg2 Almost automatic.

[But cautious types (well, all sorts of types) have played 6.Qc2 significantly often.]

[And an interesting if extremely rare (12 games vs. over 1600 for 6.Bg2 and 6.Qc2 combined!) move is 6.Qa4+!? Bd7 7.Qc2 , taking a page from Black's Catalan/Queen's Indian/ Bogo trick of misplacing the other player's queen's bishop -- if indeed it is so bad there (heading for c6, especially after ...dxc4, thus neutralizing White's Catalan bishop).]

6...0-0

[6...dxc4]

7.0-0 Again, this and 7.Qc2 have happened hundreds of times.

[Would you consider 7.Qc1!? It's done rather well!]

7...dxc4 Again, lots of alternatives, but this is the forthright continuation. **8.Qc2** And here too. This pawn isn't going to go so easily.

[8.e3!? Ra6!? is one curious development (computer approved! But Mamedyarov played it a couple times (2-0), admittedly vs. Carlsen and Sevian.). (8...b5!? 9.Ne5 Ra6 10.a4 c6 11.Nc3 Rb6 12.Qe2 Nfd7 13.f4!? Bb7 14.Ne4 Qe7 15.Qe1 f6 16.Nxd7 Nxd7 17.Bxb4 axb4 18.a5 Ra6 19.Nc5 Nxc5 20.Qxb4 Rfa8 21.Rfd1 Qc7 22.dxc5 Rxa5 23.Rxa5 Rxa5 24.Rd6 Ra1+ 25.Kf2 Kf8 26.Qd2 Ke7 27.Qd4 Bc8 28.Bxc6 Ra6 29.Bd7 c3 30.Qxc3 1-0 Sethuraman,S (2639)-Urazayev,A (2460) Baku op 2023 (3))]

[But 8.e3 c6!? might be a more stubborn way to maintain the extra

pawn.]

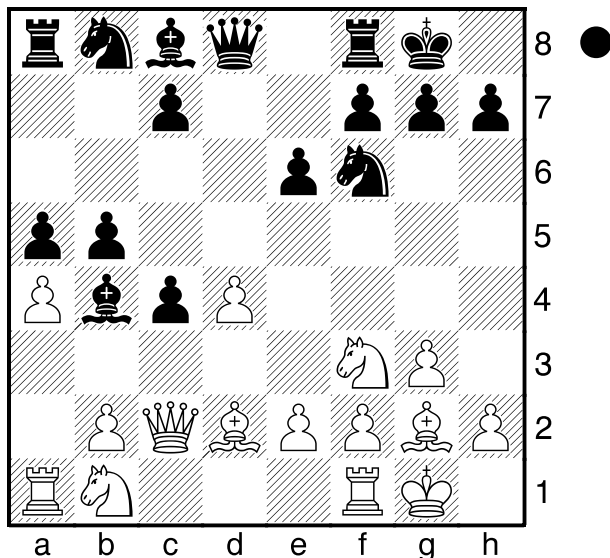
[8.Bg5!? has hundreds of games as well.]

8...b5 Possibly suspect.

[8...Bxd2 is the main move, essayed by the Cars (Carlsen, Caruan, and C--er, Karjakin) with a good score.

9.Nbxd2 b5 10.a4 (10.Ne5!? Ra7!? 11.e3 Bb7 12.Bxb7 Rxb7 13.a4 c6 14.b3 cxb3 15.Nxb3 b4 16.Nxc6 Nxc6 17.Qxc6 Ra7 18.Rfc1 Nd5 19.Rc5 Nc3 20.Kg2 h6 21.Rc1 Kh8 22.Rc2 Qa8 23.Qxa8 Rfxa8 24.Rc1 Nxa4 25.Ra1 Nxc5 0-1 Zimina,O (2295)-Kozak,A (2422) EU-ch Blitz Katowice 2022 (8) Oh, a blitz game with a rating discrepancy...) 10...c6 11.b3 cxb3 12.Nxb3 Na6 13.Qxc6 Bd7 14.Qc3 bxa4 15.Nxa5 Nd5 16.Qd2 Rb8 17.Rfc1 (17.Ne5!±) 17...Ndb4?! (17...Nab4!) 18.Nc4 (18.Ne5!) 18...Qe7 19.Nb2 Rfd8 20.Nxa4 Bc6 ½-½ Niemann,H (2688)-Caruana,F (2783) Chess.com Rapid Wk21 Swiss Chess.com INT 2022 (1) Hans was doing well but faded:]

9.a4!



Bxd2?! Stepping into a forcing sequence that has done quite well for White.

[9...c6 10.axb5 Bxd2 11.Nfxd2]

[9...bxa4!

A) 10.Rxa4 Bb7 11.Bxb4 axb4 12.Rxa8 (12.Rxb4 Bd5) 12...Bxa8 13.Nbd2 c3±;

B) 10.Ne5 Qxd4!? (10...Ra6 11.Rd1 c5±) 11.Bxa8 Qxe5± is ragged compensation for the exchange.]

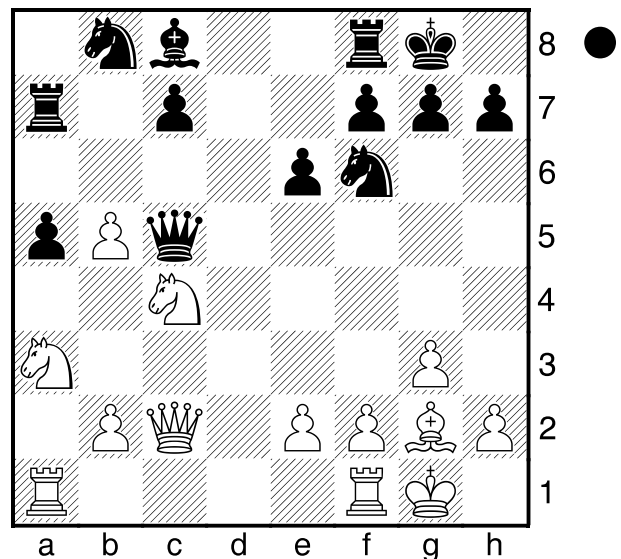
10.Nfxd2! Ra7 11.axb5 Qxd4 12.Nxc4

[12.Qc3]

[12.Na3]

12...Qc5 13.Nba3±

[13.Qb3 is even a bit better]



Speaking of ragged! But the big problem is, how to solve the absurd position of that rook on a7. **13...a4?!** That doesn't solve anything.

[13...Bb7 14.Bxb7 Rxb7 15.Rac1 Qb4 16.Rfd1 Nbd7 17.Qd2 Nc5 18.Nxa5 Qxd2 19.Rxd2 Nce4 20.Rdc2 Ra7 21.Nc6 Ra4 22.f3 Nd6 23.e4 Nb7 24.Ne7+ Kh8 25.Rxc7 Na5 26.Rc8 1-0 Toniutti,E (2182)-Santos,R (2142) Titled Tuesday intern op 18th Jul Late Chess.com INT blitz 2023 (5)]

[13...c6!?]

[13...Bd7!?]

14.Rac1

[It's an easy annotation to note that 14.Rfc1 makes more sense, keeping a rook aiming at a4.]

14...Nbd7? Giving up on the White squares.

[14...Bb7 15.Bxb7 Rxb7 16.Qxa4 Ra7 17.Qd1 Qh5!? shouldn't work, but at least it could put a scare into White.]

15.Ne3

[15.Qd3!+- says SF]

15...Qb6?!

[15...Qe7 16.Qc3]

[15...Qxc2 16.Rxc2 Nb6 17.Rfc1 Ne8± Ugh, but still holding on...]

16.Rfd1 Okay, this rook is pulling its weight. The bad news: Black is lost. There just isn't any solution to the backward c-pawn, while White can continue to improve. **16...Ne5 17.Qc5?!** A combination of reduction and preying on young players' traditional endgame weakness. But it could give Black a hopeful continuation.

[On 17.Qc3! Dasika might have been annoyed by Neg4 18.Nxg4 Nxg4 but 19.Qd4 trading queens anyway, still leaves Black with big problems.]

17...Ned7?

[17...Qxc5 18.Rxc5 Ned7 19.Rc3 Nb6 20.Rdc1 Ne8 Black might yet get in...Bb7. Not equalizing, but fighting on.]

18.Qxb6?

[18.Qe7! Re8 19.Qb4 c5 20.Qd2+- when Black hasn't really made progress.]

18...Nxb6!

[18...cxb6 19.Rc6+- will pick off that pawn eventually.]

19.Rc3

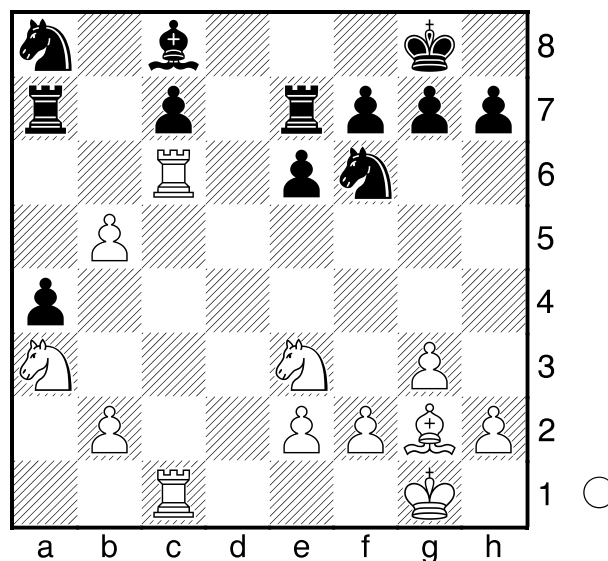
[19.Rc5]

19...Re8

[19...Bd7!? 20.Rdc1 Rc8± is a goal line defence that might just work for a while!]

20.Rdc1 Re7 21.Rc6 Na8

[Not that 21...Rb7 was more palatable! 22.Nec4 Bd7 23.Rxb6! Rxb6 24.Nxb6 cxb6 25.Rc4 wins the pawn on the way to juicy squares down the a-file.]

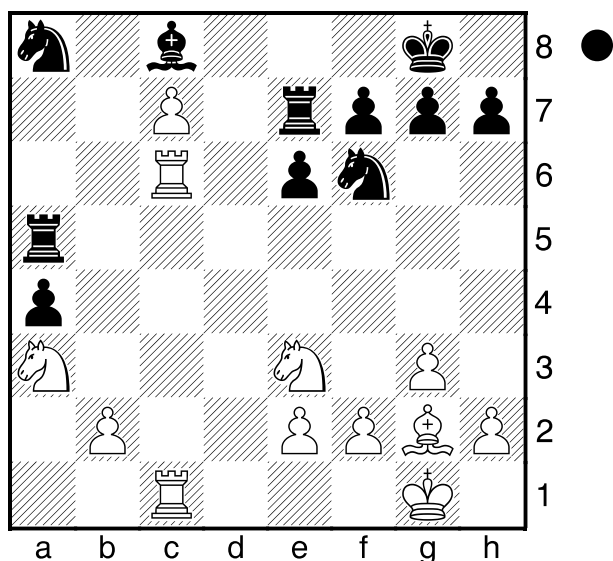


Ugh. **22.b6!** Winning material, maintaining a bind. **22...Ra5?!**

[22...Nxb6 23.Rxb6 cxb6 24.Rxc8+ Re8 White didn't actually win material, but the endgame is (computer here) winning. The Catalan Bishop could yet rule on two diagonals at once (from c6)!]

23.bxc7

(Diagram)



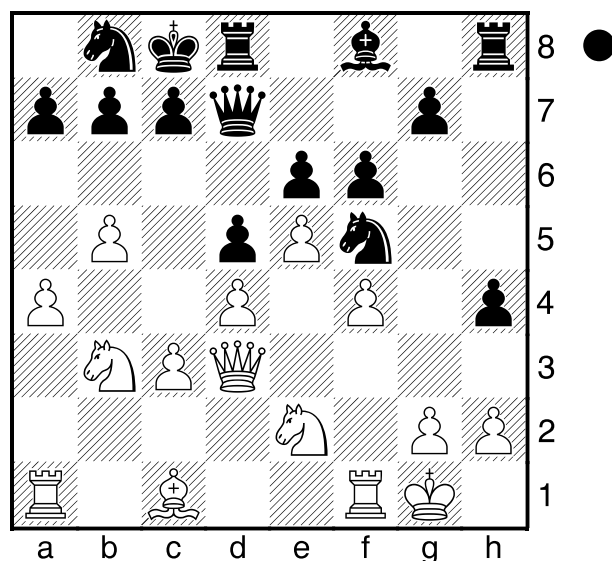
Alarms are going off when such a pawn is still on the board. **23...Ne8 24.Nec4 Rh5 25.Nd6 Nxd6 26.Rxd6 Kf8 27.Rd8+ Re8 28.Bc6** A *very* interesting game! It's back to the drawing board for Black.

[28.Bxa8]
1-0

Tsodikova, Natalya **B00**
2181
 Santos, Catalino Jr **1969**
 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.2) 12.12.2023
[Winslow, Elliott]

Natalya, in a welcome return to the TNM wars, lines up to make the money with a smooth win. 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.c3 e6 5.Ne2 Be7 6.Ng3 Bg6 7.Be2 Qd7 8.0-0 Bf8 9.f4 Nge7 10.Bd3 0-0-0 11.b4 Bxd3 12.Qxd3 h5 13.Nd2 h4 14.Ne2 Nf5 15.Nb3 f6 16.b5 Nb8 17.a4

(Diagram)

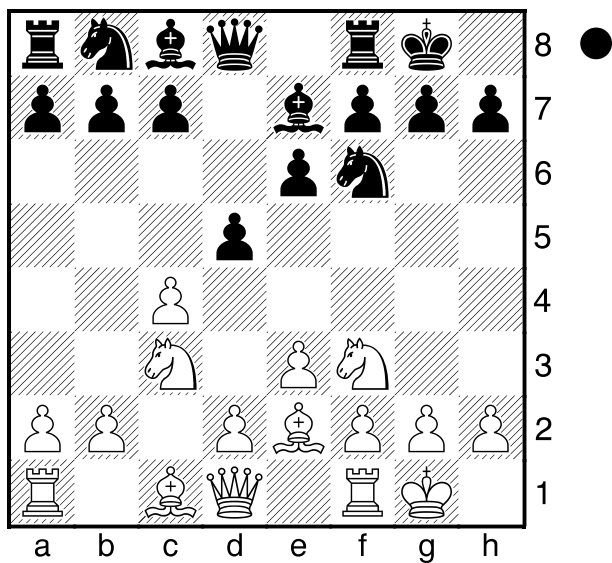


White's pawns are rolling to open lines towards Black's king -- and on the other side? Crickets. 17...Qf7 18.a5 b6 19.axb6 cxb6 20.Bd2 Rd7 21.Ra4 Be7 22.c4 fxe5 23.fxe5 dxc4 24.Rxc4+ Kd8 25.Qe4 Ke8 26.Rc8+ Rd8 27.Rxd8+ Bxd8 28.d5 Qb7 29.Nc3 g6 30.Qg4 Rg8 31.dxe6 Rg7 32.Ne4 Qc7 33.Nd6+ Nxd6 34.exd6 Qxd6 35.Bb4 1-0

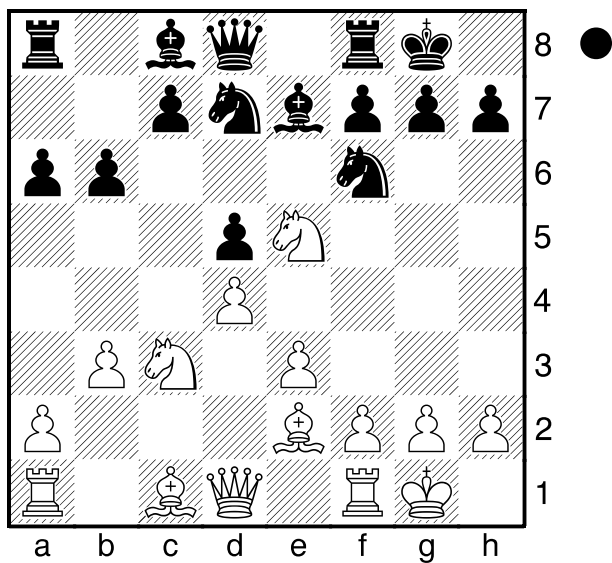
Lewis, Edward **A17**
1932
 Parsons, Stephen **1802**
 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.4) 12.12.2023
[Lewis, Edward]

EW: Classic Ed Lewis. Sound?
Computer evaluation? Forget that! Mano a Mano! **1.Nf3 Nf6 2.e3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0**

(Diagram)

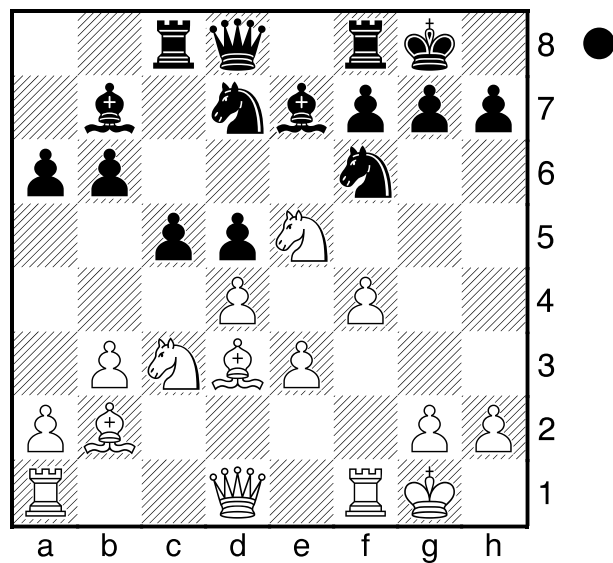


**Nbd7 7.b3 a6 8.d4 b6 9.cxd5 exd5
10.Ne5**

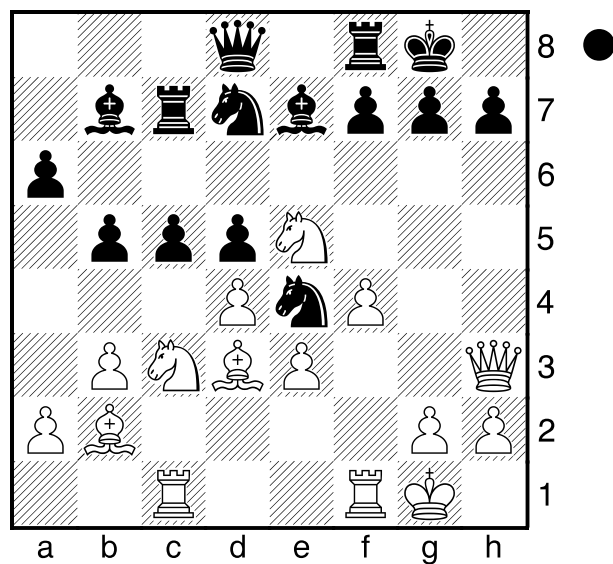


Bb7 11.f4 Rc8 12.Bd3 c5 13.Bb2

(Diagram)

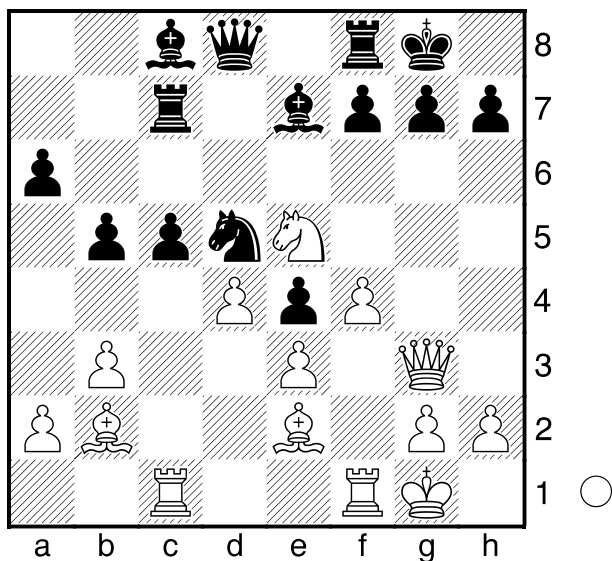


b5 14.Qf3 Rc7 15.Qh3 Ne4 16.Rac1

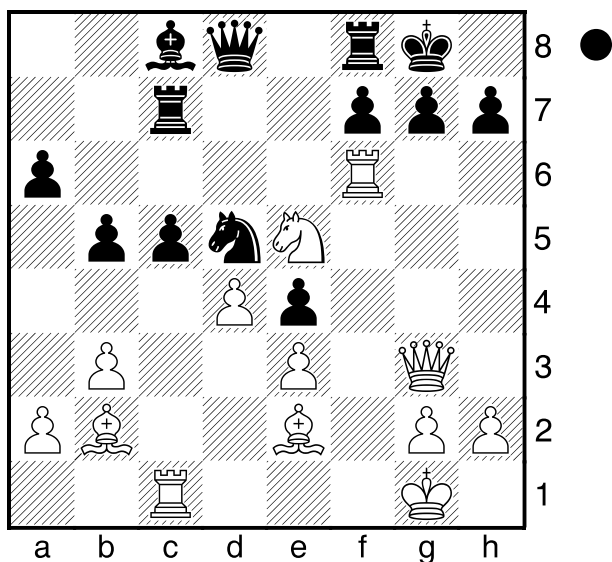


**Ndf6 17.Nxe4 dxe4 18.Be2 Bc8
19.Qg3 Nd5**

(Diagram)

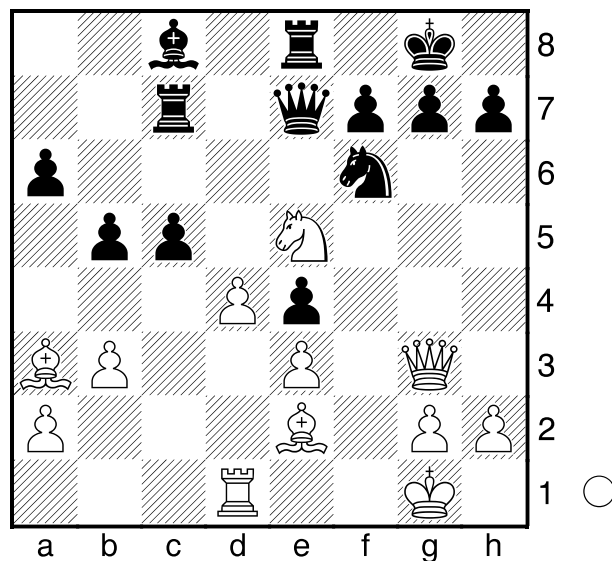


20.f5 Bg5 21.f6?! Taking the Black pressure down a bit and opening lines (-0.86) 21...Bxf6 22.Rxf6

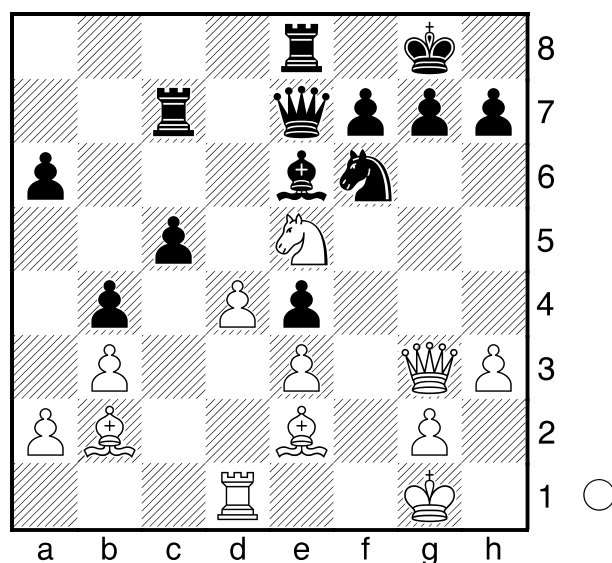


IM Elliott Winslow said that this type of play constitutes the Ed Lewis Reality Distortion Field. Perhaps he is right. (-1.60) **22...Nxf6 23.Rd1 Qe7 24.Ba3 Re8**

(Diagram)

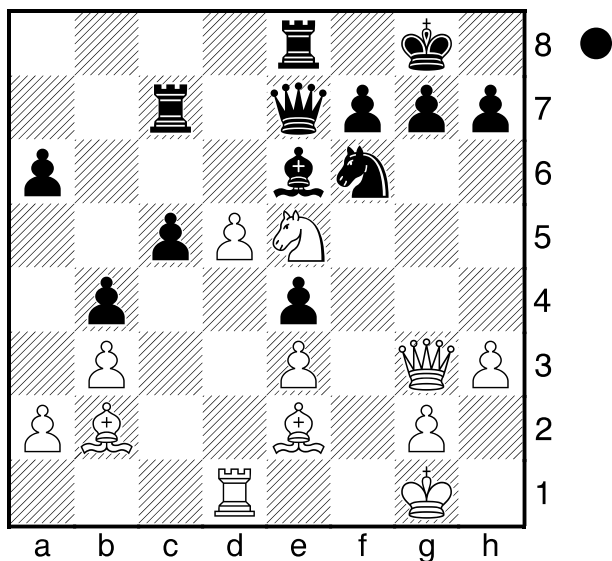


25.h3 b4 26.Bb2 Be6?



and just like that, White is better (+1.66) **27.d5!**

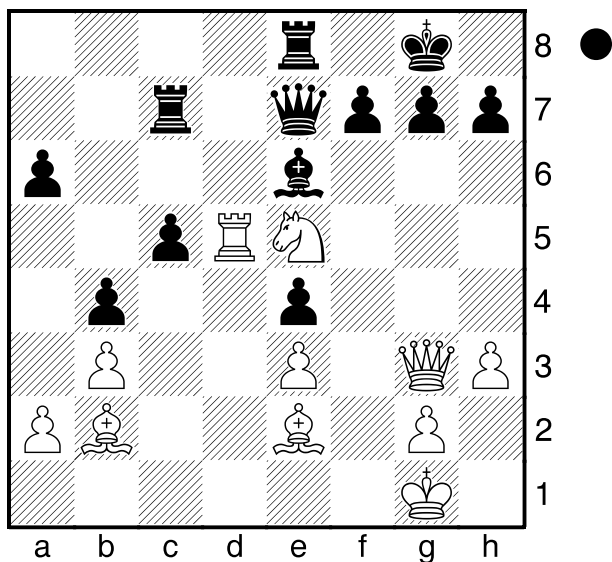
(Diagram)



Nxd5

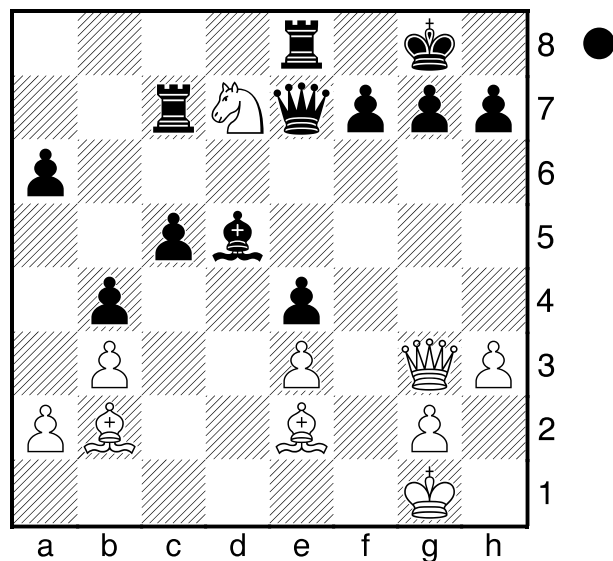
[27...Bxd5 28.Ng4 Nxg4 29.Rxd5 f6
30.Qxg4 (+3.00)]

28.Rxd5!



Bxd5 29.Nd7!!

(Diagram)

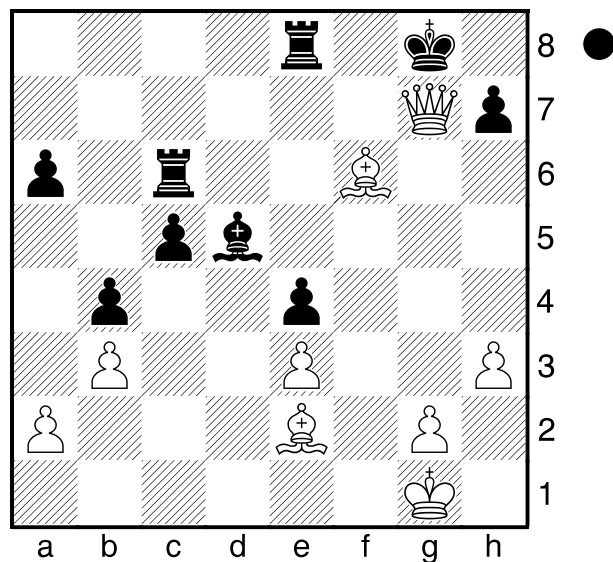


Dislocating the Q & R, while controlling
the f8 square so the Black queen cannot
stop the mate on g7 (+5.20) **29...f6**

30.Nxf6+ Qxf6 31.Bxf6 Rc6

Black loses his way in defense

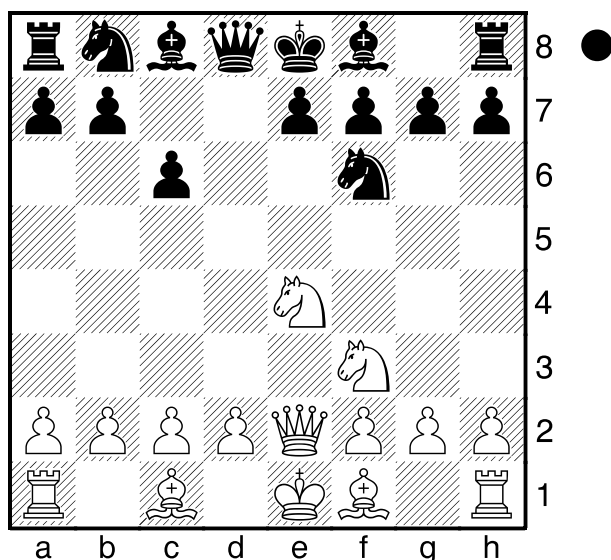
32.Qxg7#



1-0

Walder, Michael **B11**
 Jian, Sheng **1922**
1590
 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (6.6) 12.12.2023
[Winslow, Elliott]

Mike Walder wasn't thrilled with his rating plummeting below 2000 (way below!), but at least made some bucks and a chunk of rating points, clinching first in the 1600-1999 section with a round to go. Jian Sheng recovered with a win in the last round, grabbing third. **1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6** Black needs to take this Two Knights Variation of the Caro Kann more seriously. This isn't the currently still raging ...Nf6; Nxf6+ exf6 thing. **5.Qe2**



This has been seen a lot at the highest level. But is it a serious play for advantage? Or a "can't lose" line? I don't know, but when you see MVL with a plus score on both sides (what happened to the Najdorf?), you do have to wonder. **5...Nxe4 6.Qxe4 Qa5** Slightly annoying for White, but just slightly.

[6...Qd5 sends White's queen off *somewhere* (probably f4).]

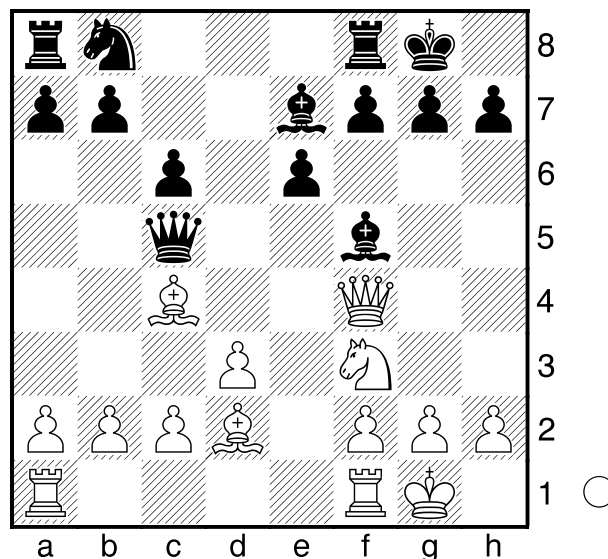
[But 6...Nd7 is the Main Move.]

7.Bc4 Bf5! Carlsen, MVL, looks good.

Svane has a huge score for Black in over a dozen games. **8.Qf4 e6** White has only a nominal plus. **9.0-0 Be7 10.d3 0-0 11.Bd2**

[11.g4!? Bg6 12.a4 "spacing up."]
11...Qc5?!

[11...Qd8 12.Bc3 Nd7 (Svane and others): it's like some Center Counter where White has avoided d2-d4.]



12.a4N

[We've come this far, and Mike's move is definitely more subtle than B v C:

12.b4 Qd6 13.Qxd6 Bxd6 14.a4 Rc8 15.b5 cxb5 16.axb5 Nd7 17.Nh4 Bg4 18.h3 was 1-0 48, Kiesel, L (1701)-Gaertner, A (1414) Verden op-B 2023 (7) after

A) 18...Bh5 19.g4 Be7 (19...Bg6 20.f4) 20.Nf5 exf5 21.gxh5 Ne5! 22.Bd5 Rxc2 23.Be3±;

B) 18...Be7? 19.hxg4 Bxh4 20.g5±]

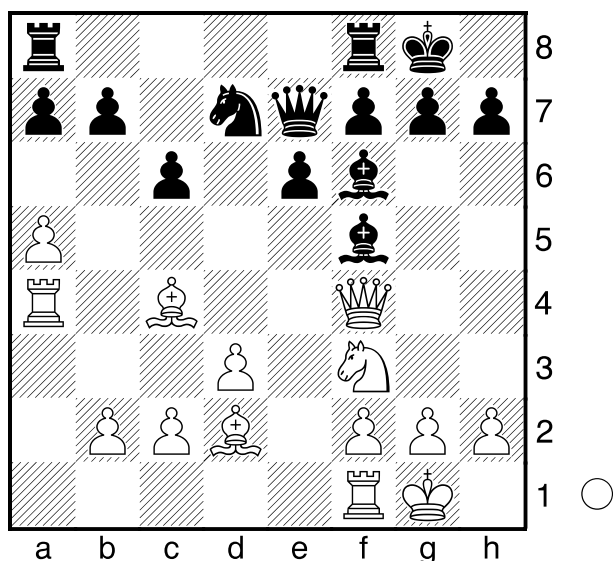
12...Nd7 13.a5 With some sneakiness in mind... **13...Bf6?!**

[13...Bd6= 14.Qe3 Ne5 (14...Qxe3)]

14.Ra4 A one-mover: **15.Bb4. 14...Qe7**

[Mike's Tactical Analysis suggests 14...Be5 15.Nxe5 Qxe5 16.Qxe5 Nxe5 but 17.Bb3± is somewhat

surprisingly not so easy for Black.
That a-pawn and the a-file annoy: b5
18.axb6 axb6 19.Rfa1 And there's
always the Two Bishops and the lack
of a great (permanent) square for
Black's knight. Steinitz's constriction
method!]



15.Bb4

[15.g4!± is tactical trouble: b5
(15...g5 16.Nxg5 Bxg5 17.Qxg5+
Qxg5 18.Bxg5 Bxg4 19.Rb4)
16.axb6 Nxb6 17.Rb4 g5! 18.Nxg5
Bxg5 19.Qxg5+ Qxg5 20.Bxg5 Bxg4
21.Bh6 Bh3!? (21...c5!?)]

**15...c5!± 16.Ba3?! White lets much of
the plus slip.**

[16.Bd2± It's hard to appreciate
White's advantage, but it's there.]

16...Qd8 Some pawn move on the
queenside was better. **17.Bb5 Be7**

18.h4

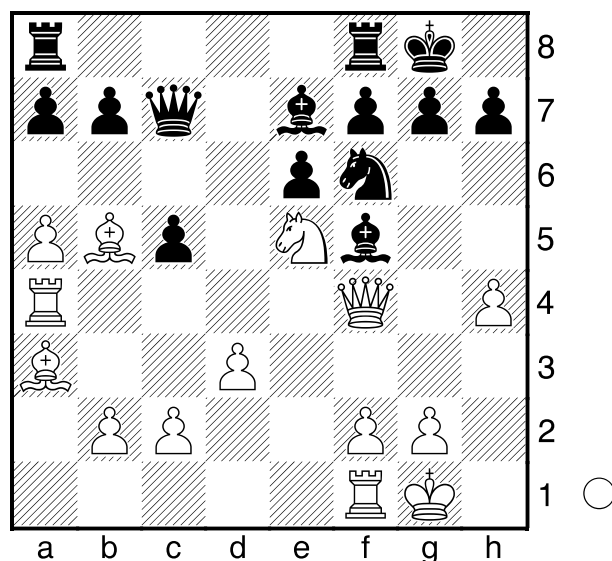
[White should try 18.a6± b6 19.g4
Bg6 20.h4]

18...Nf6!= Black is fully equal and even a
bit more. **19.Ne5?**

[19.a6 b6 20.b3]

19...Qc7?

[19...Bd6!± puts White on the spot!]



20.Nd7! This doesn't win or anything, but
it must have been some sort of surprise.

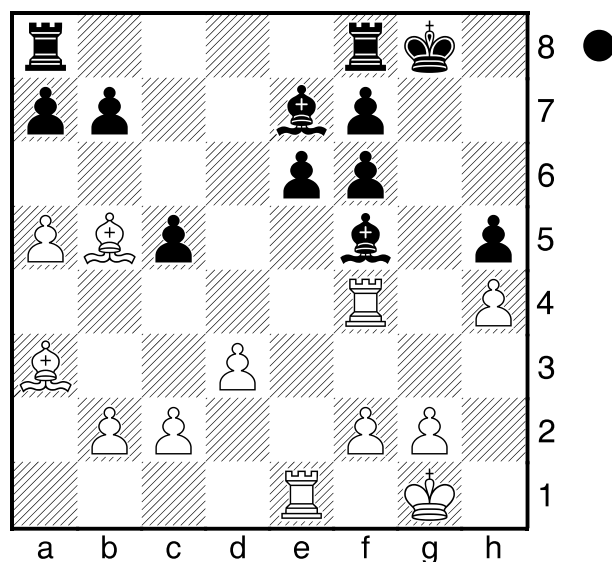
20...Qxf4?!

[20...Bd6 21.Nxf6+ gxf6 22.Qh6 a6
23.Bc4 Bf4 24.Qxf6 Be5 25.Qg5+
Kh8 and White only has 26.Bb3!
to keep the balance!]

21.Nxf6+± gxf6

[21...Bxf6 22.Rxf4 h5!? 23.Bxc5
Rfc8 24.Rc4!± a6 25.Ba4 Bxh4
26.Rd1! Bd8! 27.Bb6 g5 Black is
holding on.]

22.Rxf4 A lot of little threats: g4 **22...h5**
23.Re1



(Rxf5) **23...Rfd8??** Black cracks.

[23...a6 24.Ba4 Bd8± (24...Bd6 25.Rc4! Rfc8 26.d4) 25.b4 cxb4 26.Bxb4 Bc7

A) 27.Bxf8 Kxf8! (27...Bxf4 28.Be7± and Rb1);

B) 27.Rxf5!? exf5 28.Re7±]

[23...Bd6! 24.Rc4 b6=]

24.Rxf5

1-0

□ **Persidsky,Andre**

■ **Horde,Nicolas T**

D46

1781

1526

Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (6.11) 12.12.23

[Horde,Nicolas T]

A nice win by Nicolas, in a line that has become a problem for White ever since the amazing Aronian-Anand game from Wijk aan Zee 2013. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.Nf3 Nbd7 6.Bd3 dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5 8.Bd3 Bd6 9.0-0 0-0 10.e4**

[That game went 10.Qc2 Bb7 11.a3 Rc8 12.Ng5 c5 13.Nxh7 Ng4 14.f4 cxd4 15.exd4 Bc5! 16.Be2 Nde5!!]

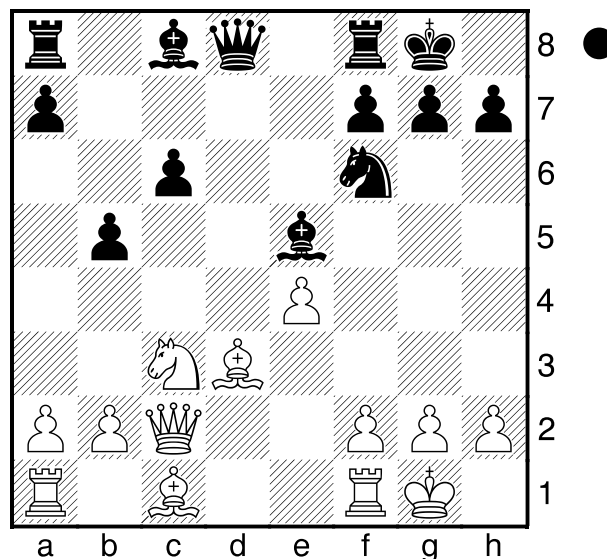
10...e5! Black has equalized **11.dxe5**

[Here are some 2600 players at it:

11.Bg5 Re8 12.d5 cxd5 13.Bxb5 d4 14.Nd5 Be7 15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.Rc1 Rb8 17.Qa4 Rb7 18.Rc4 Rf8 19.Rfc1 Nb6 20.Nxb6 Qxb6 21.Rxc8 Qxb5 22.Rxf8+ Kxf8 23.Rc8+ Ke7 24.Qc2 Rd7 25.g4 h6 26.Kg2 Rd8 27.Rc5 Qa6 28.Nxe5 Bxe5 29.Rxe5+ Kf8 30.Qc5+ Kg8 31.Rd5 Re8 32.Qxd4 Qxa2 33.Rd7 Qe6 34.f3 a5 35.Kg3 Kh7 36.Qd5 Qxd5 37.Rxd5 Rb8 38.Rxa5 Rxb2 39.Ra7 Kg8 40.Ra8+ Kh7 ½-½ Dubov,D

(2600)-Smeets,J (2615) Tata Steel-B 75th Wijk aan Zee 2013 (1)]

11...Nxe5 12.Nxe5 Bxe5 Entering a typical Meran position **13.Qc2?!**

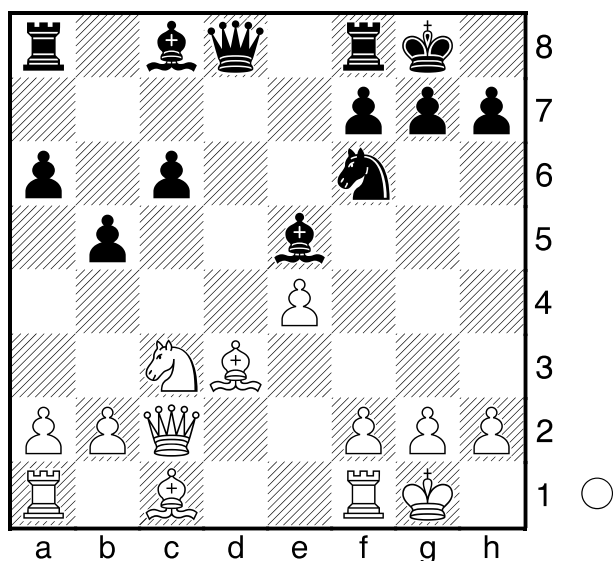


I thought this was a mistake. I think my opponent confused this move with an anti-Meran but we are playing a Meran. I spent a long time deciding between Ng4, a6 and the incorrect greek sacrifice Bxh2 **13...a6**

[13...Bxh2+?? A massive blunder because White's DSB can come to f4 and cover h2 at the end of the variation 14.Kxh2 Ng4+ 15.Kg1 Qh4 16.Bf4!]

[13...Ng4! My initial thought, my main concern was that I did not see a clear continuation after g3. SF gives it the best move because Black simply forces a concession from White 14.g3 Qe7 15.Bd2 Rd8 16.Be2 This is very pleasant to play for White]

(Diagram)



SF's second best move, my idea is just to wait because White has a hard time developing the DSB **14.f4?** For some reason I had a feeling there was a possibility White will play f4, the idea is probably to start a kingside attack where White has the pawn majority. However there's one clear refutation to this move

[14.Bg5? Bxh2+ 15.Kxh2 Ng4+ 16.Kg1 Qxg5 Classic]

[Predecessor: 14.Re1? Bb7

(14...Ng4!) 15.f3 c5

0-1 Apostolakaki,E (1218)-Karavitaki, E (1690) GRE-ch U12 Girls Achaia 2017 (2)]

[EW: 14.h3! is only a slightest of plusses for Black. No Greek Gift!]

14...Bd4+! The only move to maintain a crushing advantage **15.Kh1 Ng4!**

It was on my radar since I played a6, I did not see a defense for White who has to give up material or really suffer. Black threatens Qh4 **16.g3** Prevents Qh4 but allows another tactic

[16.h3 Qh4! Threatening the fork on f2. Black DSB still cannot be developed 17.Ne2 Nf2+ 18.Kh2 Ba7 The position is unholdable in my opinion. (EW: It took Stockfish almost a minute (!) to refute 19.Ng1 Ng4+!

20.Kh1 Qg3!! 21.hxg4 (21.Nf3 Nf2+ 22.Rxf2 Qxf2) 21...Bxg4 22.Bd2 Qh4+ 23.Nh3 Bxh3 24.Be1 Qh5 25.Bf2 Rfd8!-+]

16...Nf2+! 17.Rxf2 Bxf2 And the queen is overloaded **18.Kg2**

[18.Qxf2 Qxd3]

18...Bb6 19.Ne2 Covering d4 **19...c5 20.b3 Qd7!** Threatening to infiltrate on h3 **21.Ng1 Bb7**

[21...c4! 22.bxc4 Bxg1 23.Kxg1 Qd4+! Missed that one but the position is already desperate for White even without this cute tactic]

22.Bb2 Rad8 Like with a6, I had a feeling he would play Rd1 and allow me to finish quickly... **23.Rd1 Bxe4+!**

There's no perpetual by sacking both bishop on g7 and h7 at the end of the variation so this forces matters **24.Bxe4 Qxd1 25.Bxh7+ Kh8 26.Qf5**

White is looking to sack on g7 to force a perpetual

[26.Bxg7+ Kxg7 There's no perpetual]

26...Qd5+ Kills any counterplay so White resigned (down 2 exchanges, the g1 knight is out of the game, there's still a fork threat on d2 so White is lost)

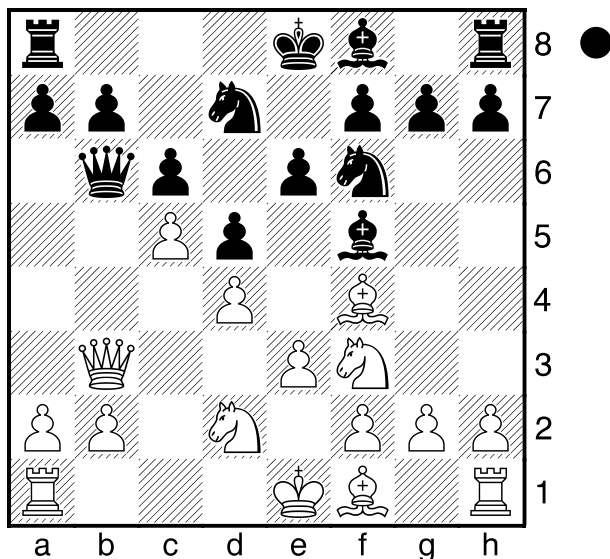
[26...a5 A random move to illustrate White's idea 27.Qh3 Leads to a decisive counter attack (27.Bxg7+ 28.Qg5+ Kxh7 29.Qh4+ Kg6 30.Qg5+ Draw by perpetual)]

0-1

Hule,Pratyush **D02 1388**
Nystrom Burke,Oliver Peter **1276**
 Winter TNM: 1200-1599 (6.20) 12.12.23
 [Winslow,Elliott]

This second loss in a row, a tactical melee, finally stopped the Nystrom

Burke juggernaut. Had he won he might have at least tied for first in this section's TNM as well. Still, we might expect more to come in 2024. And now Pratyush is just a half point behind Hayes, with an inevitable matchup in the last round. Unfortunately for whatever reason he was unable to make the last round, letting Marvin take clear first; he still tied for 2nd-6th. **1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 Bf5 4.e3 e6 5.Nbd2 Nbd7 6.c4 c6 7.Qb3 Qb6 8.c5**



Qxb3 9.Nxb3

[9.axb3! a6 10.h3 Be7 11.b4 0-0 12.Nb3±]

9...b6?

[9...a5 10.Be2 Ne4=]

10.Rc1±

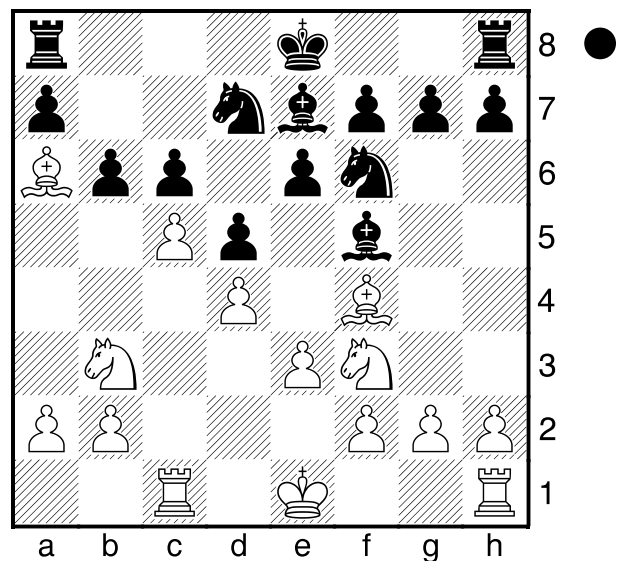
[10.Ba6! bxc5 11.Bb7 Rb8 12.Bxb8 Nxb8 13.dxc5 Kd8±]

10...Be7?!

[10...bxc5 11.dxc5 Ne4 12.Nfd4±]

11.Ba6!+-

(Diagram)



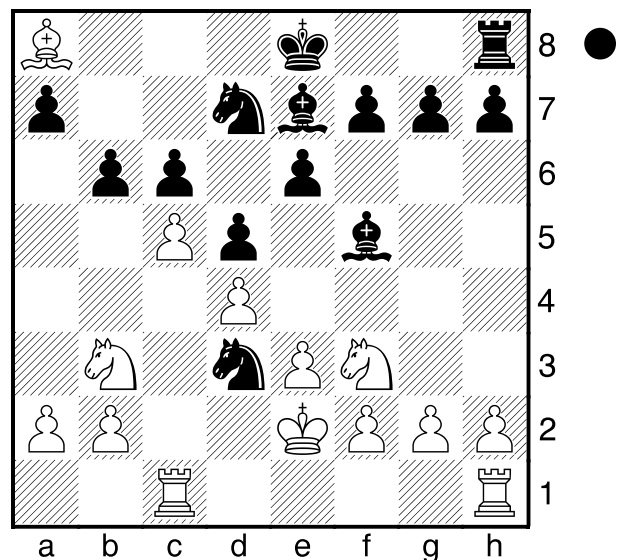
Nh5 12.Bb7

[12.Bc7]

12...Nxf4 13.Bxa8

[13.exf4!]

13...Nd3+ 14.Ke2



Nxc1+?!

[14...bxc5!± 15.dxc5 (15.Bxc6?! c4!±) 15...Nxc1+ 16.Rxc1 Bg4±]

15.Rxc1+- bxc5 16.Bxc6 c4 17.Ne5 0-0 18.Nxd7 Rc8 19.Ba4 f6 20.Nbc5 Bg6 21.Nxe6 Bd3+ 22.Kd1 g5 23.Nec5 Kf7 1-0

B13

 **Walters, Mitchell**

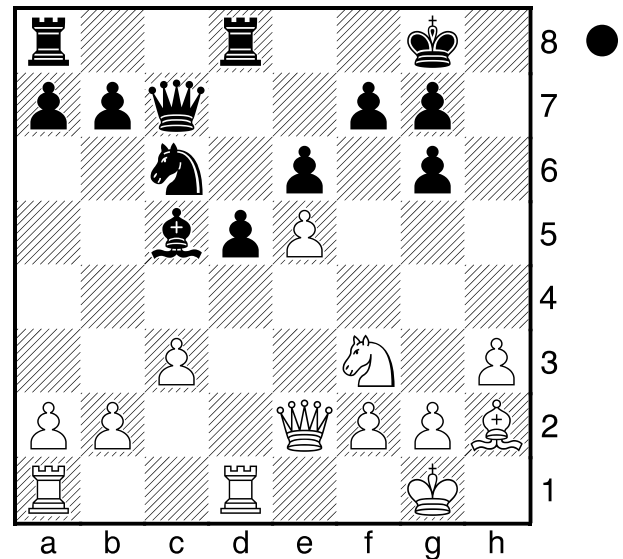
 **Fisher, Brett**

Winter TNM: u1200 (6.28) 12.12.2023

[Winslow, Elliott]

As I had just found out that I had been suffering from Covid for the last month, I was rather low on annotator's energy -- so I see that the last dozen or more games I was more looking to get back to sleep than to find something interesting to write about. But now I can at least see who won the sections, and pick a game or two for these last couple rounds. This win by Brett Fisher who tied for 1st-2nd was without flaw on his part. He was solid in the opening, he occupied good squares, he pressed on the half-open file on the queenside and won material, he finished up tactically. Well done. 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.c3 Nf6 7.Bf4 e6 8.Nbd2 Bd6 9.Bxd6 Qxd6 10.0-0 0-0 11.Re1 a6 12.Qc2 Bxf3 13.Nxf3 Rac8 14.a3 h6 15.Rac1 b5 16.Qd1 Na5 17.Qc2 Nc4 18.Bxc4 bxc4 19.Ne5 Rb8 20.Re3 Rb3 21.f3 Rfb8 22.Re2 Rxb2 23.Qxb2 Rxb2 24.Rxb2 Qxa3 25.Rb8+ Kh7 26.Rbb1 Nh5 27.g3 f6 28.Nd7 Qd6 29.Nc5 e5 30.Ra1 exd4 31.cxd4 a5 32.Rxa5 Nxg3 33.hxg3 Qxg3+ 34.Kh1 Qxf3+ 35.Kh2 Qh5+ 0-1

He plays solid openings, he avoids problem squares and pieces, he takes slight plusses. And he's pretty brisk about it -- even if you find your way through there's the clock. In his short time in the TNMs he's won quite a few games where his opponents just didn't have the time to find their way to the draw. 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 Nc6 6.dxc5 e6 7.0-0 Bxc5 8.Bf4 Nge7 9.Nbd2 0-0 10.h3 Bxf3 11.Nxf3 Qc7 12.Bh2 Ng6 13.Bd3 Nb4 14.Bxg6 hxg6 15.c3 Nc6 16.Qe2 Rfd8 17.Rfd1



d4 18.b4 Bb6 19.b5 Ne7 20.cxd4 Rac8 21.Bf4 Nd5 22.Bg5 Nc3 23.Qf1 Rd5 24.Rdc1

(Diagram)

B12**1969****2218**

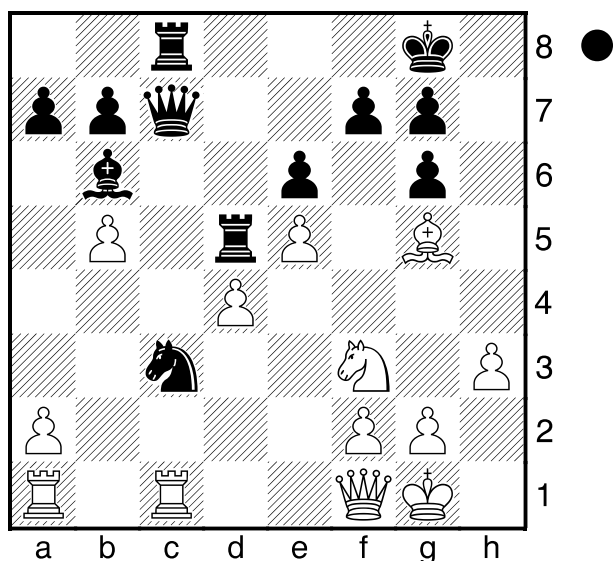
 **Santos, Catalino**

 **Dasika, Archit**

Winter TNM: 2000+ (7.1) 19.12.2023

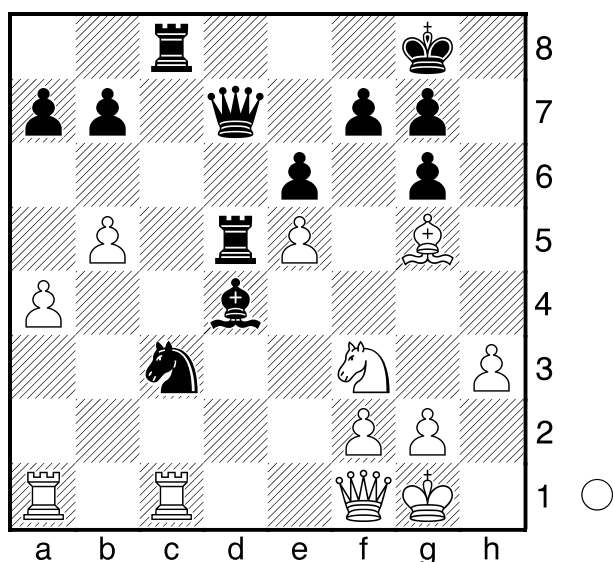
[Winslow, Elliott]

Dasika had already clinched clear first but played his last game anyway. He has a style that's especially difficult to crack.



Qd7?!

[24...Qb8!]
25.a4!± Bxd4

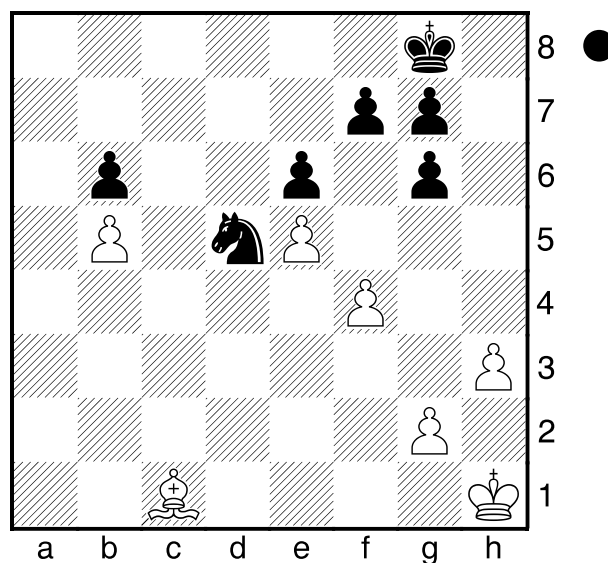


26.Nxd4?!

[26.Qe1! Qc7! 27.Kh1 Bb6!
 Actually Black has to find some only moves. 28.Rc2!± And still comes out worse.]

26...Rxd4 But now it's nothing to speak of. The "good knight vs. bad bishop" motif annoys White until the end of the game, but on the board he was holding. But it cost time... **27.Be3 Rdc4 28.Kh1 b6 29.a5 Qc7 30.axb6 axb6 31.f4**

Nd5 32.Bd2 Qc5 33.Rxc4 Qxc4 34.Qxc4 Rxc4 35.Rc1 Rxc1+ 36.Bxc1=



Kf8 37.Kg1 Ke8 38.Kf2 Kd7 39.Bd2 Nc7 40.Be3 Nxb5 41.Bxb6 Kc6 42.Be3 Kd5 43.Kf3 g5 44.g3 gxf4 45.gxf4 Nd4+ 46.Kg4 Nf5 47.Bd2 Ke4 48.h4 Nh6+ 49.Kg5 Kf3 50.h5 Nf5 51.Bb4 Ng3 52.Bf8 Ne4+ 53.Kh4 Kxf4 54.Bxg7 Kf5 55.h6 Kg6 56.Kg4 Nc3 57.Bf8 Nd5 58.Bg7 Ne7 59.Bf8 Nd5 60.Bg7 Nc3 61.Bf8 Nd5

This is actually a three-fold repetition, but given that White lost on time on the next move he probably couldn't show it anyway. **62.Kh4= Ne7 Time**

0-1

B20

Parsons,Stephen

1802

Wu,Zhuoyuan

1802

Winter TNM: 2000+ (7.5)

19.12.2023

[Winslow,Elliott]

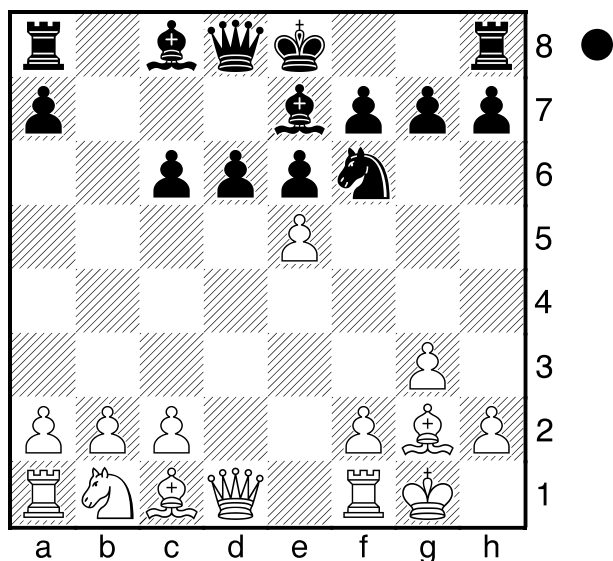
Zhuoyuan Wu, another dangerous youngster, had an up-and-down slugfest with Stephen Parsons. It was one of those exchange sacrifices for the fianchetto'd bishop that defends the king,

and Wu missed a win and could have gone down brilliantly -- but Parsons first played a dicier knight check, then another inaccuracy and Zhuoyuan was back in. Then it was drawn, then Wu blundered, Parsons returned the favor -- and in a complicated endgame Wu eventually took it down. Very exciting!

1.e4 c5 2.g3 d6

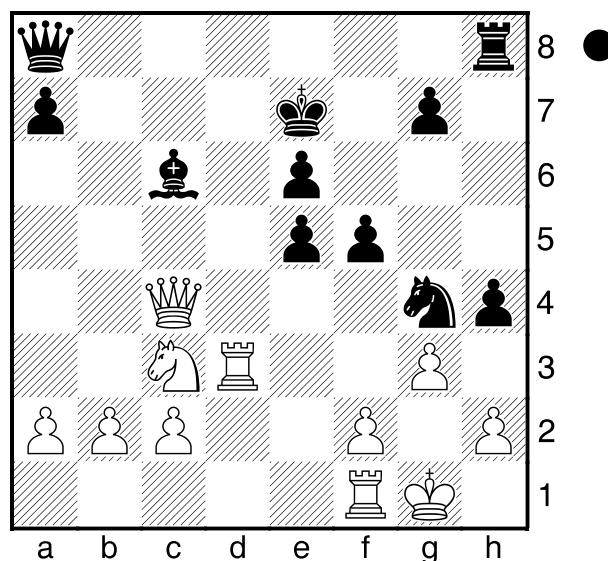
[2...d5]

3.Bg2 Nc6 4.Ne2 e6 5.0-0 Nf6 6.d4 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Be7 8.Nxc6 bxc6 9.e5



dxe5 10.Bxc6+ Bd7 11.Bxa8 Qxa8 12.Nc3 Bc6 13.Qe2 h5 14.Bg5 Ng4 15.Bxe7 Kxe7 16.Qc4 f5 17.Rad1 h4 18.Rd3

(Diagram)



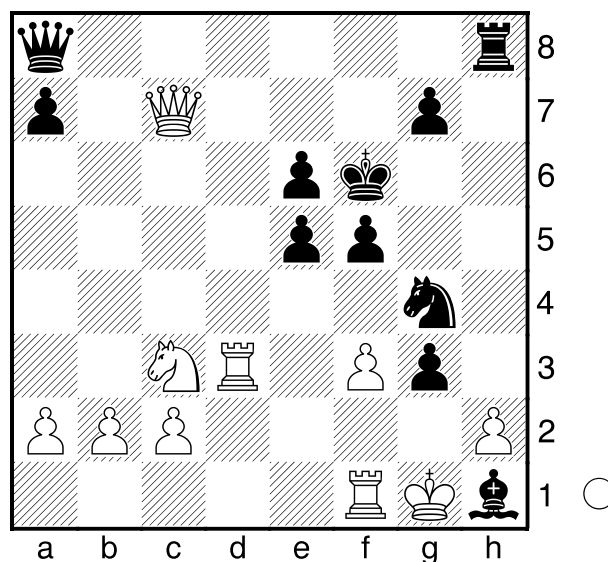
Bh1??+-

[18...hgx3+-]

19.f3

[19.Qc7+ Kf6 20.f3]

19...hgx3 20.Qc7+ Kf6



21.Ne4+

[21.Nd5+!

A) 21...exd5 22.Qd6+ Kf7
(22...Kg5 23.f4+!) 23.fgx4
(23.Qd7+);

B) 21...Kg6 22.fgx4 f4 23.Kxh1
(23.Rxf4!?) 23...Rxh2+ 24.Kg1
exd5 25.Qxe5 d4 26.Qf5+ Kh6
27.g5+ Kh5 28.Qh7+ Kg4

(28...Kxg5 29.Rxg3+) 29.Rxf4+!
 Kxf4 30.Rxd4+ Kxg5 (30...Ke5
 31.Qxg7+) 31.Qxg7+ Kf5
 (31...Kh5 32.Qe5+ Kh6 33.Rd6+)
 32.Qg4+ Ke5 33.Qf4+ Ke6
 34.Rd6+ Ke7 35.Qf6+ Ke8
 36.Re6+ Kd7 37.Re7+]

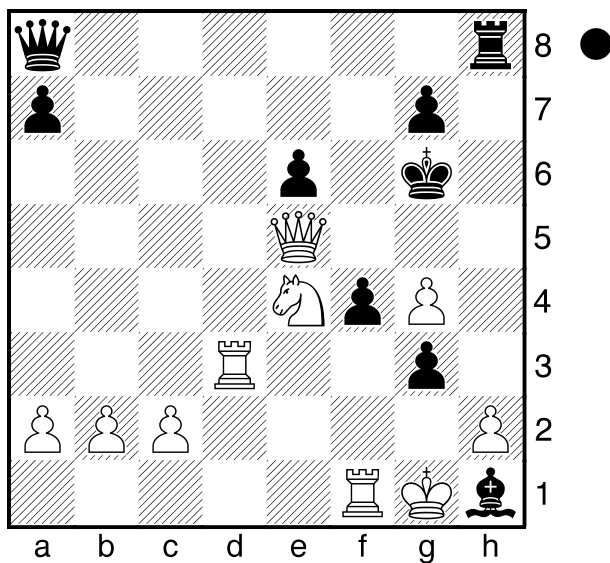
21...Kg6 22.fxg4?

[22.Nd6!+- Nxh2 23.Qf7+ Kh7
 24.Qxe6]

22...f4

[22...gxh2+= 23.Kxh1 (23.Kf2??)
 23...Qxe4+ 24.Rdf3 fxg4 25.Qf7+
 Kh7 26.Qh5+=]

23.Qxe5



Bxe4??

[23...Qxe4 24.Qxe4+ Bxe4 25.Rd2=
 Kg5 26.Re1 Ba8 27.Rxe6=]

24.Rd7+- gxh2+ 25.Kf2 Rh7 26.Re7?!

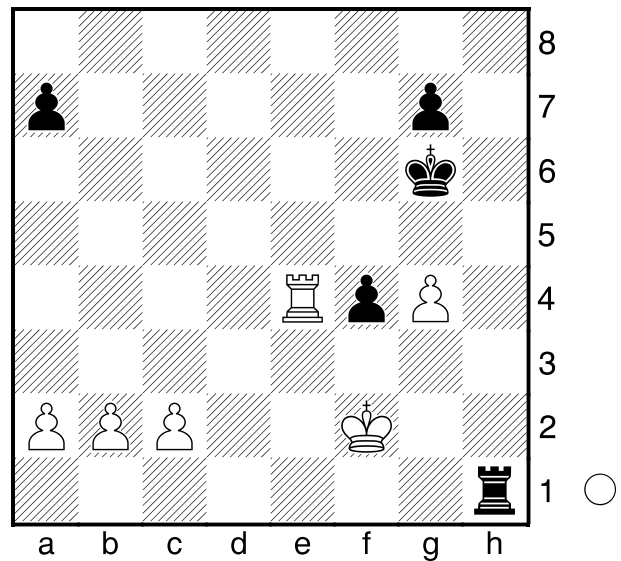
[26.Qxe6+ Kg5 27.Qe5+ Kh4
 (27...Kxg4 28.Rf7) 28.Qxf4!+-]

26...Qd5! 27.Rxe6+! Kf7 28.Re7+ Kg6

29.Qxe4+ Qxe4 30.Rxe4 h1Q

31.Rxh1 Rxh1

(Diagram)



32.Kf3?

[32.Rxf4! Rh2+ 33.Kf3! Rxc2
 34.Rb4+-]

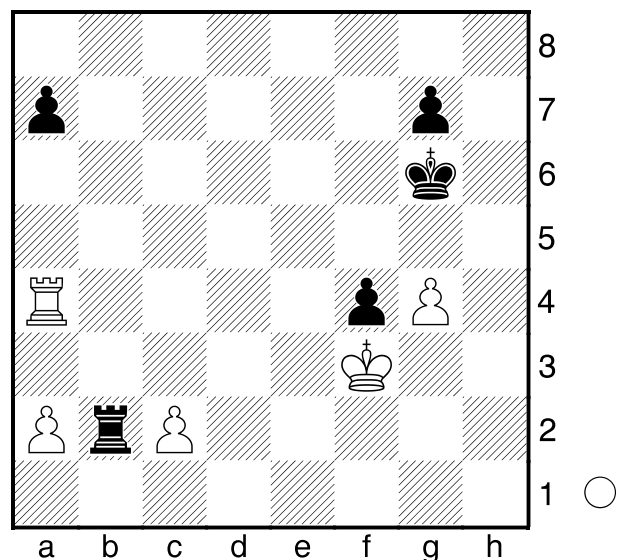
32...Rb1?

[32...Rf1+ 33.Ke2 Rb1=]

33.Ra4

[33.b4! Rf1+ 34.Ke2 Rc1 35.Kd2!
 Rf1 36.c4+- f3 37.c5]

33...Rxb2





34.Rxa7?

[34.c4! Kf6 (34...Kg5 35.Rxa7 g6
 36.Ra5+ Kh4 37.Kxf4) 35.Kxf4 g5+
 36.Ke4 Re2+ 37.Kd5!]

34...Rxc2= 35.Kxf4 Rc4+ 36.Kg3

Rc3+ 37.Kh4 Rc6 38.Ra4 Rb6 39.Rf4 Ra6 40.a4 Ra5 41.Kg3 Rc5 42.Kf2 Re5 43.Kf3 Re6 44.Rf5 Ra6 45.a5 Rc6 46.Rb5 Rc3+ 47.Kf4 Rc4+ 48.Kg3 Rc3+ 49.Kh4 Kf6 50.Rb6+ Kf7 51.a6 Ra3 52.g5 Ra5 53.Kh5 Ra4 54.Rb7+ Kf8 55.a7 Kg8 56.Rb8+ Kf7 57.a8Q?? g6+ 0-1

 **Wong,Wilson** **B75 1863**
 **Admassu,Yonathan** **1663**
 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (7.6) 19.12.2023
[Wong,Wilson]

EW: Wilson Wong took clear second with this tense victory over up-and-coming Stockton player Yonathan Admassu. As regular readers of the games archive know, Wilson always sends in his detailed thoughts about his games, independently of the sharpest theory sometimes, but always insightful. Perhaps he's lucky the rampaging Michael Walder decided not to play the last game (1st was already decided), else they would have met. Still, well-earned. **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 a6 8.Qd2 h5** Black plays last book move. ...h5 is a popular way in dealing with an English/Yugoslav attack. Many moves are better than what I played, including Be2, Bc4, h3, and more. **9.0-0-0?** I know this response against the Najdorf is also inaccurate but I am not sure why it's so bad. Black has dramatically slowed down White's ability for a kingside attack and grabbed space on both wings so White can take advantage of Black's tempo loss to do something in the center. Bc4 style isn't popular in the mainline so I was less willing to wing it in this line, but I can

see how it would be strong, stopping White from breaking with ...d5. I didn't like all the tempis Black would gain against my c4-bishop and c3-knight so decided to just castle and see what Black does. **9...b5** Now Bc4 isn't an option and Black will have an easier time to break in center. Additionally, Black prepares ...Bb7, which would apply pressure to White's center, which could potentially make pushing f-pawn difficult. Black is very behind in development.

10.h3

[10.Nd5 Bb7 11.Nxf6+ Bxf6 I didn't like that all I did was trade off a pair of knights to lessen the penalty of Black's slow development. Black's bishop are active, whereas White's light-squared bishop is useless.]

10...h4 Black wants to stop g4, and while it looks scary and a kingside pawn avalanche is a dangerous plan, Black is very behind in development. While White won't be able to get a English/Yugoslav attack going, there are still attacking prospects against Black's f7-g6 pawn chain, which can get softened up further by f4-f5.

[10...Bb7 This was screaming to be played. A big point behind ...a6 and ...b5 is to get the light-squared bishop to the long diagonal. Black is behind in development so finishing development should be the top priority.]

11.Bd3 Continuing development and preparing f4, f5 plan. I secure e4-pawn in view of ...b4. **11...Nbd7**

A good developing move. d7-knight has more prospects on this square, able to jump to c5- or e5-squares. Black isn't worried about Nc6 which wastes time and does nothing. **12.f4** I still have a development lead and there is no threat to my king yet. While its common to tuck the king with Kb1, I don't think b1-king is always the best square for it, and its not

so bad to force Black to make threats first for me to then better secure my king. Black hasn't castled yet. Its possible for Black to castle both sides, or play ...e6 then keep king on e7-square. Black ...O-O seems suicidal in view of f5, Rdg1, g3, ripping open lines to Black's king. If Black tries to ...O-O-O then the fragility of Black's central pawns can be cause for concern once White's f-pawn trades with Black's g-pawn, giving White's knight a beautiful f5-square. Black's d6-e7 pawn chain is vulnerable to knight sacrifices, removing a defender go f6-knight. Additionally, Black ...O-O-O just takes away any pressure to White's king, while Black's king is still susceptible to attack, and because of that, White would also have an easier time playing in the center. Black keeping king in center will take time and would be very uncomfortable. **12...Bb7** The natural developing move fails tactically. **13.a3** I didn't consider more candidate moves, missing a killer tactical shot. Since I miscalculated, I just secured my c3-knight which is vital to keeping my center intact for the meantime.

[13.e5

A) 13...b4 14.exf6?? This was what I calculated which made me avoid e5. (14.Na4 dxe5 15.Ne6 fxe6 16.Bxg6+ Kf8 17.fxe5 White once again has a completely dominant position. Black's pawn center was destroyed, Black's king has no pawn shelter, White has way more active pieces, and tons of open lines, especially to Black's king.);

B) 13...dxe5 14.Ne6 fxe6 15.Bxg6+ Kf8 16.fxe5 White wins back piece, destroys Black's central pawns, destroys Black's pawn shelter, and opens the position when Black is undeveloped while

White is well developed.]

13...Qc7 Common square to develop queen to. Black can line up a battery on c-file but c2-pawn is well defended for the time being.

[13...Nc5 Black could've forced White to resolve the situation in the center, triple-attacking e4-pawn. 14.e5 dxe5 15.fxe5 Nd5 (15...Nfd7??

For some reason I missed 15...Nd5.

16.e6 The idea I was going for, but missed candidate move that crushes White.) 16.Nxd5 Qxd5 17.e6 17...Qa2 or 17...O-O-O and Black is way better.]

14.f5 Thematic pawn-break in response to ...h5 setups. White weakens Black's square control in center and has the possibility of Ne6 fork if Black's f7-pawn is no longer there to cover e6-square.

14...Ne5 Its hard to make recommendations for Black. Black's king is unsafe on the wings, while in the center it is currently blocking rooks from connecting. **15.fxg6 Nxg6 16.Nf5** I not only win f5-square for my knight, I also either win the bishop pair or push Black to undevelop. **16...Bf8** Black has hard choices to make. Black's dark-squared bishop is vital to contest dark-squares and tries to hold onto center together, hoping to withstand any attacks, then finish development. **17.Qf2**

Preventing ...O-O-O, pressure h4-pawn, and open rooks contact on d-file. Black needs to address Nxd6 and Bxb5+ threats. **17...Rc8** Black seeks counterplay. **18.Rhf1** The move I wish I played was 18.Nxd6+ but Stockfish likes the move I played more. I don't know why this move is preferred. The text move does develop a piece and apply pressure on the weak f-file, but I like the positions after 18.Nxd6+ significantly more since it wins a pawn and destroys Black's pawn center. In the current

position, it isn't clear how I should proceed after something like 18...Bc6.

[18.Nxd6+ I wanted to make this move but only saw it after I made the move in the game. I need to sharpen my pattern recognition and be more attentive to overloading tactics. exd6 (18...Qxd6 19.Bxb5+ axb5 20.Rxd6 Nxe4 21.Nxe4 This looks very good for White.) 19.Qxf6 White wins a pawn and destroys Black's pawn center.]

18...Ne5 Black doesn't stop my Nxd6+ threat so I'm not going to waste my second chance to make the move.

19.Nxd6+ This wins a clean pawn and destroys Black's pawn center, which also is supposed to support Black's king.

19...exd6

[19...Qxd6 20.Bxb5+ axb5 21.Rxd6 Rxc3 White is way better.]

20.Qxf6 White just has everything in the position. White has a safer king, a better pawn structure, more active pieces, and more material. **20...Rg8** Reasonable to go for some counterplay. **21.Rf2**

[21.Qf2 I discarded this move because I wanted my rook to do duty of covering my 2nd rank pawns, but underestimated the dangers of Black's dark-squared bishop and the precarious position of my king, which also exposes it to pins and forks. Rg3 22.Kb1 Nxd3 23.Rxd3 Bg7 24.Bd4 Stockfish's top recommendation. Stockfish neutralizes Black's threats, leaving White with a superior position and two extra pawns.]

[21.Bd4 Nxd3+ 22.Rxd3 Rxc3 I didn't like I was giving Black counterplay in a position I assumed there was no way I shouldn't convert.]

21...Rg3 I thought this was an empty threat since I'll be following up with exchange of a piece, getting closer to an endgame.

[21...Bg7 22.Qxh4 Nxd3+ 23.Rxd3 This looked totally harmless to me which is why I didn't fear ...Bg7, but later the piece will be a thorn in my side.]

22.Bf4 This looked like a simple move to liquidate into a winning endgame.

[22.Bd4 I discarded this move in view of the skewer ...Bg7, which wins an exchange or a piece. Bg7 23.Qf5 (23.Qxh4?? Rxd3 24.cxd3 Ng6 Black is slightly better, and practically, it looks very difficult for White.) 23...Nxd3+ 24.Rxd3 Rxd3 25.Bxc7 I didn't see this in the game and would avoid this if possible. Stockfish gives this +2.0 which seems fair, but I can see myself with a slim chance of fumbling the game into a draw.]

22...Bg7 This caught me by surprise, since it leaves h4-pawn hanging. Black's pieces are so well positioned, but fortunately, White is two pawns up, and White's pieces are on reasonable squares. **23.Qxh4** Fortunately the tactics work in White's favor. I grab the free pawn, which also removes the defender to g3-rook. Black has to make something work because the endgame is totally lost. **23...Nxd3+ 24.cxd3** The correct recapture, disconnecting g3-rook's contact. **24...Bxc3**

[24...Rg6 The only move to fight for a draw. The endgame is totally lost for Black so Black's only chance is to keep pieces on the board and make White's progress difficult. Black's bishop pair and the semi-open position is a very strong asset compared to White's clumsy rooks, which has more difficulty navigating the board.]

25.Qxg3 1-0 White wins. **25...Bxb2+ 26.Kxb2 Qc3+ 27.Ka2** White's king finds shelter from checks and is just a

rook and pawn up.

1-0

□ **Tam,Hoa Long**

■ **Dutter,Frederic**

B03

1583

1914

Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (7.7) 19.12.2023

[*Tam,Hoa-Long*]

EW: This line brings back memories for me -- I haven't looked at the theory for over thirty years! I played White against IM William Martz in the 1973 and had a transcendent incident, sacrificing two rooks for a knight and a completely impossible to calculate position, winning when he lost the thread. Back then I thought the Four Pawns Attack was the refutation of the Alekhine Defense; nowadays I wimp out and play 4.Nf3. Let's see Hoa-Long's understanding of this particular line. He was winning but lost the way... **1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3**

[7.Nf3?! Bg4 8.Be3±

Likely transposes into the game, but up a tempo for Black.]

7...Bf5 8.Nc3 e6 9.Nf3

[9.Be2 tries to to delay Nf3 another move, hoping that black blocks themselves from playing ...Qh4+ later. Be7 10.Nf3 Bg4 11.0-0±]

9...Bg4 10.Be2 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Qh4+ 12.Bf2 Qf4 13.c5 Nd5 first move out of book **14.Nxd5 exd5 15.Qc1?!**

Offering a queen trade on c1 makes more sense before pushing 13.c5.

[15.Qd2 White's rook isn't necessarily good on c1. Trading on d2 instead helps activate the king. If Black avoids the trade, he's going to have a hard time developing the rest of his pieces given his space disadvantage. Qxd2+ (15...Qf5 16.0-0-0 a5 17.Qd3 Qd7±

Jones - Sveshnikov, 2011, 1-0.)

16.Kxd2 g6 17.Be3± Pavasociv - Nakamura, 2008, 1-0]

15...Qxc1+

[15...Qf5 16.Qe3 (16.Qc3)

16...Nb4±]

16.Rxc1 g6?!]

[16...Ne7 17.Bd3 g6 18.Kd2 Bh6+ 19.Be3 Bxe3+ 20.Kxe3± Bad knight versus bad bishop, but White should be able to make threats on both sides of the Board, while Black's king will struggle to contribute]

17.Bb5 Black is going to have a hard time preventing me from giving him doubled c-pawns. Once I trade off the knight, there's no more pressure on d4.

[17.Be3 Ne7]

17...Bh6 18.Rc3 f6 19.Bg3

[19.Be3

A) 19...Bxe3 20.Rxe3 fxe5

(20...Kd7 21.f4 Rae8 22.Kf2±)

21.Rxe5±±;

B) 19...g5 20.h4 0-0-0 (20...fxe5

21.dxe5 0-0-0 22.Bxc6 d4

23.Bxb7+ Kxb7 24.Bxd4 gxh4

25.Rxh4±) 21.Bxc6 bxc6 22.hxg5

Bxg5 23.Bxg5 fxe5 24.Kf2±

no reason to give Black an outside connected passed pawn.]

[19.exf6 0-0 20.Bxc6 bxc6 21.Bg3

Rxf6 22.Bxc7 Raf8 23.Rf1 R8f7

24.Be5 Rf5 25.Ke2 Bg7 26.Bxg7

Kxg7±]

19...0-0-0 20.Bxc6 bxc6 21.f4?!

I was happy to turn my bishop into a pawn and enjoy the passed pawn in an endgame, but this is perhaps too passive

[21.exf6? doesn't win a pawn

immediately because of Rde8+

22.Kf2 Rhf8 23.Be5 Bg5=]

[21.Rf1 fxe5 22.Bxe5 Rhf8 23.f4±]

21...Kd7 22.Rf1 f5?! Relieving the tension and closing down the kingside should be good for White. White can now go gang up on Black's a-pawn. 23.Kd2?

Walking into the pin did raise flags for me, but I wanted to save a tempo moving my king to c3 so I can get my rooks to the a- and b- files.

[23.h4 Completely shutting down the queenside. I was worried that Black could trade a set of rooks to give me doubled b pawns, but that just helps my other rook target Black's a pawn. Rb8 24.Rf2 (24.Rb3 Rxb3 25.axb3 Rb8 26.Rf3 Rb4 27.Rd3 a5 28.Kd1 a4 29.Kc2 axb3+ \mp ; 24.b3!?) Locking my rooks out of the queenside. Maybe from here I can reroute my rooks to the h file and try to give Black a backwards pawn on the kingside. Rb4 25.Rd3 a5 26.a3 Rb5 27.Kd1 Rbh8 28.Kc2 Ke6 29.Rh1 \pm) 24...Rb4 25.Rd2 Rbh8 26.Rcc2= I don't see how either side makes any progress]

23...g5 24.Kc2

[24.fxg5 Bxg5+ 25.Kc2 \pm likely transposes into the game]

24...gxf4 25.Bxf4 Bxf4 26.Rxf4 Ke6 27.Rh3 Rdg8 28.Rh5 Rf8 29.Kd3?!

[29.Rh6+ Kd7 30.Kd3 \pm]

29...h6 30.Rfh4 f4 31.Ke2?

[31.Rxh6+ Rxh6 (31...Ke7 32.Rxh8 f3 33.Rxf8 Kxf8 34.Rf4+-) 32.Rxh6+ Ke7 33.Ke2 f3+ 34.Kf2 \pm]

31...f3+ 32.Kf2 Rhg8 33.Rxh6+ Ke7 34.Rf6 Rxf6 35.exf6+ Kxf6 36.Kxf3?!

[36.Rf4+ Kg5 37.Rxf3 Re8 38.Re3 Rf8+ 39.Ke2 Rf4 40.Kd3 Rf2 41.Re2 Rf3+ 42.Kc2 Rf4 43.Rd2 Rf3+- White's plan is to push b3 then run the king up the a-file.]

36...Re8 37.Rh6+ Kg5 38.Rxc6 Re4 39.Rxc7 Rxd4 40.Rd7?

[40.Rxa7 Rc4 41.Ra5 d4 42.Ke2 Rc2+ (42...Kf4 43.Kd3 Rb4 44.c6 Rxb2 45.Rc5 Rb8 46.c7 Rc8 47.a4+-) 43.Kd3+-]

40...Kf6 41.Rd6+?

[41.c6 Ke6 42.Ke3 Rc4 43.Rxa7 Rxc6 44.Kd3 Ke5+-]

41...Ke7 42.Ke3 Rh4 43.Rxd5 Rxh2

44.Rd2?? allows my king to get cut off [44.b4! Rxa2 45.Kd4

A) 45...Rb2 46.Kc4 Rc2+ 47.Kb5+-;

B) 45...Rd2+ 46.Kc4 Rxd5 47.Kxd5 Kd7 48.b5 Kc7 49.c6

B1) 49...Kc8 50.Kd6 Kd8 51.c7+ Kc8 52.Kc6 a6 53.b6+- (53.bxa6??=);

B2) 49...Kb6 50.Kd6+-;

C) 45...a5 46.b5 a4 47.Kc4 a3 48.Kb3+-]

44...Rh4 45.Kd3 Kd7 46.Kc3+ Kc6 47.b4??

[47.Rd4 Rh3+ 48.Kc4+-]

47...a5 48.a3??

[48.Rd4 Rh3+ (48...Rxd4 49.Kxd4 axb4 50.Kc4 \odot +-) 49.Kc4 axb4 50.Kxb4 \pm]

48...axb4+ 49.axb4 Kb5 Allowing Black's king to get to a5 ends all hope for White. **50.Rd4**

[50.Rd6 Rxb4?? (50...Rc4+ 51.Kd3 Rxb4 52.c6 Kb6 53.Kc3 Rh4=) 51.Rb6+ Kxc5 52.Rxb4+-]

50...Rh3+ 51.Kd2 Rb3 52.Kc2 Rg3

53.Rd3 Rg2+ Black offers a draw

54.Kb3 Rg4 55.Rc3 Rxb4+ 56.Kc2

Kc6 57.Kd3 Rg4 58.Rc4 Rg3+

59.Kd4 Rg4+ 60.Kc3

1/2-1/2

D35

 **Yan,Rayna**

1628

 **Persidsky,Andre**

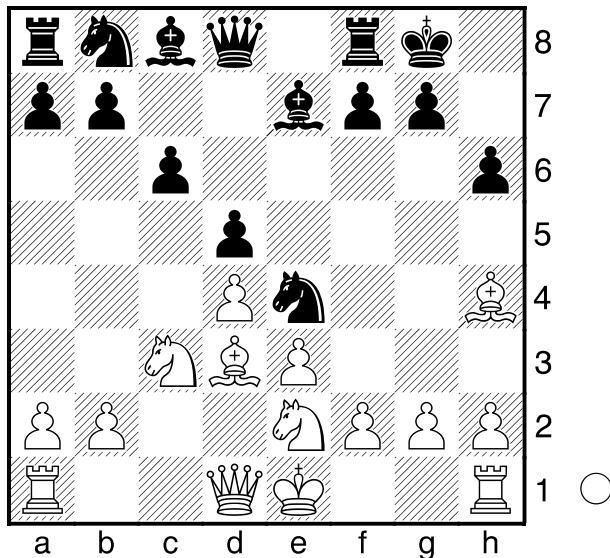
1781

Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (7.12) 19.12.23 [Winslow,Elliott]

What a game! Andre was winning, winning, but Rayna just would not be put away. Then an extremely difficult ending arose, Persidsky had a problem-like win - didn't find it and, somehow, with her own excellent problem-like play, Rayna

won! What perseverance -- and how old is she?? Seven?? Oh we're in trouble...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5
exd5 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 h6
8.Bh4 c6 9.Nge2 Ne4



10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Bxe4 dxe4 12.Qc2
f5 13.Nf4 Kh7 14.0-0

[14.h4!?]

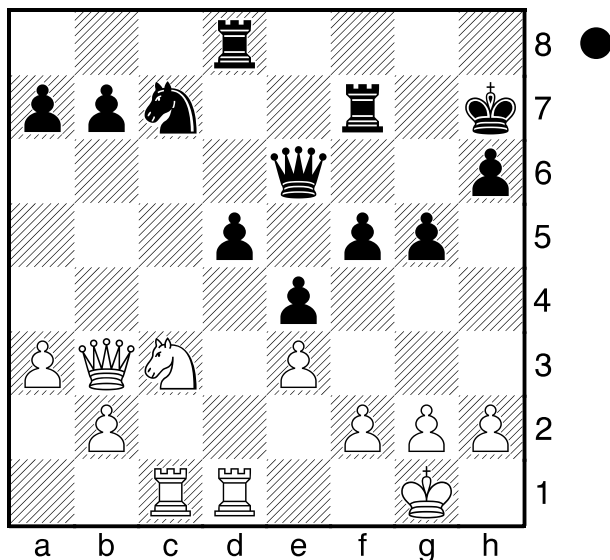
14...Na6 15.a3 Nc7 16.d5?! g5!

17.Nfe2 cxd5

[17...Nxd5]

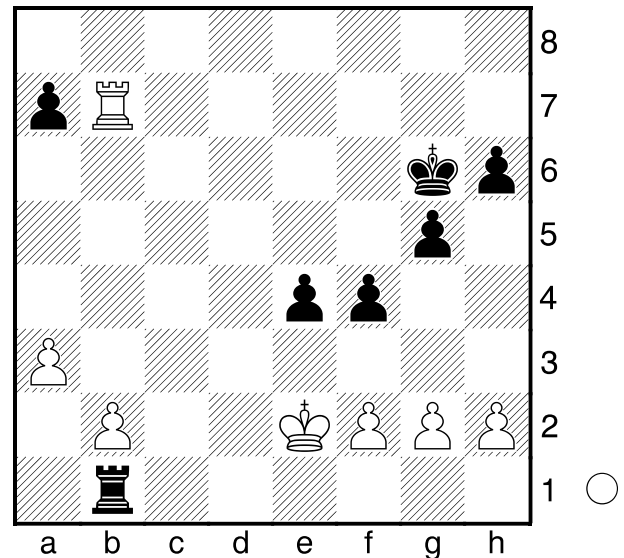
18.Rac1 Rf7 19.Rfd1 Be6 20.Nd4

Rd8 21.Nxe6?! Qxe6 22.Qb3



b6?!

[22...d4! 23.Qxe6 Nxe6 24.exd4
Nxd4 (24...Rxd4) 25.Nb5 Rfd7
26.Nxd4 Rxd4 27.Rc7+ Kg6
28.Rxd4 Rxd4 29.Kf1 Rd1+ 30.Ke2
Rb1 31.Rxb7 f4-+



] 23.Rd4 Rfd7 24.Rcd1 Qe5 25.g3?!
h5

[25...f4!]

26.Kg2?!

[26.R1d2 h4 27.Qd1]

26...h4 Rf7 27.a4 Rd6

[27...f4-+]

28.Nb5

[28.R1d2]

28...Nxb5 29.Qxb5 f4-+ 30.Rc1 f3+

[30...Qf5]

[30...R8d7]

31.Kf1 Rh6 32.Ke1 hxg3 33.hxg3

Rh1+ 34.Kd2 Rxc1?!

[34...Rh2 35.Ke1 Kg6 36.g4 Kg7]

35.Kxc1 Rf7 36.Kb1 Qe6

37.Qb3?!

[37.Rd1=]

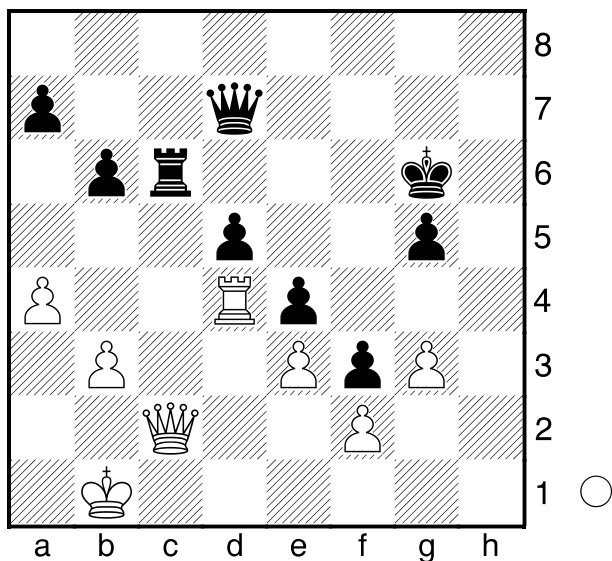
37...Kg6 Rf7 38.Qc2 Qd7 39.b3?!

[39.Qc1]

39...Rc6?

[39...Kh5-+]

[39...Kf5-+]



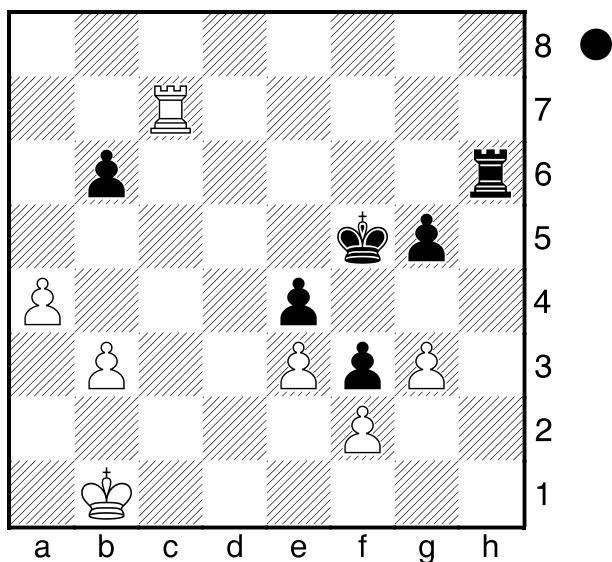
40.Qxe4+?

[40.Qd1 Rd6 41.Qg1 (41.Qh1 Qc8) 41...Qh3]

40...dxe4?!

[40...Qf5!! 41.Qxf5+ Kxf5 42.Rxd5+ Kg4 43.Rd2 Kh3 44.Kb2 Kg2 45.g4 Rh6 46.Kc3 Rh1 47.e4 Re1 48.Kd3 Kf1 49.Rc2 Re2]

41.Rxd7 Kf5-+ 42.Rxa7 Rh6! 43.Rc7



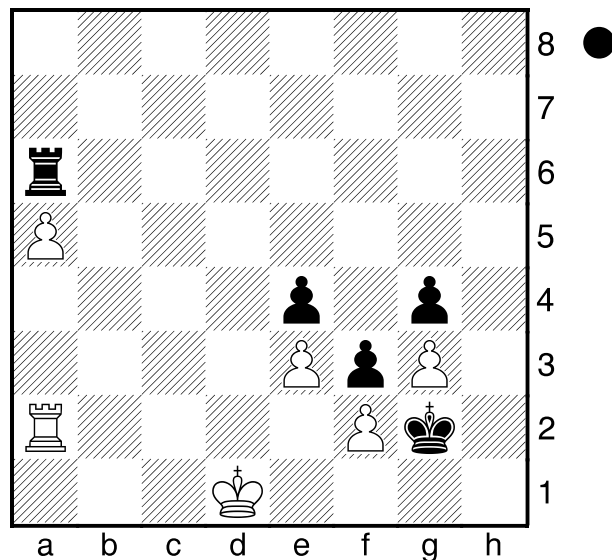
Rd6?

[43...Kg4! 44.Rc2 Kh3 45.Kb2 Kg2 46.b4 Kg1!-+]

44.Rc2?

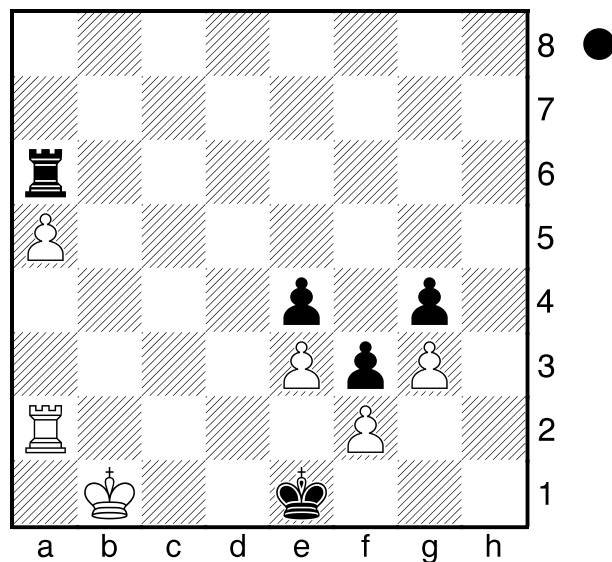
[44.Kc2! Rh6! (44...Kg4? 45.Rh7=)]

44...Kg4-+ 45.b4 Kh3 46.Kc1 Kg2 47.a5 bxa5 48.bxa5 Ra6 49.Ra2 g4-+ 50.Kd1



Rxa5??

[50...Kf1!!-+ ♠: Zugzwang. 51.Kc1 Ke1 52.Kb1



Rxa5!? 53.Rxa5 Kxf2 54.Kc2 (54.Re5 Kxe3)

A) 54...Kxe3?= 55.Kd1 Kf2 56.Ra2+ Kxg3 (56...Kf1 57.Kd2 Kf2-+) 57.Ke1 e3 58.Ra4!!= Another only move f2+

A1) 59.Ke2= Kh3 60.Rf4 (60.Re4; 60.Ra1);

A2) 59.Kf1 Kf3 60.Ra2 g3
61.Rxf2+!=;

B) 54...Kxg3!-+ 55.Kd2 Kf2-+
(55...Kg2)]

51.Rxa5 Kxf2 52.Ra2+ Kxg3

[52...Kxe3 53.Ke1 Kd4 54.Ra3 e3
55.Ra4+ Kd3 56.Rxg4]

53.Ke1! Kh3 54.Kf1 g3 55.Ra8 Kg4

56.Rg8+ Kh3 57.Kg1 Kh4 58.Re8

Kh3 59.Rxe4 f2+ 60.Kf1 g2+ 61.Kxf2
1-0

A22

□ **Cowger, Gabriella**

■ **McKemey, Hector**

Winter TNM: u1200 (7.22) 19.12.2023
[Winslow, Elliott]

EW: McKemey would have taken clear first and, having played all the opponents close by was paired a point down with Cowger -- but she played solid and he had to concede the draw and tie for first in the under-1200 section. **1.e4**

c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.Bc4 e6

[4...Nb6 5.Be2 (5.Qe2 Nxc4
6.Qxc4; 5.Bxf7+?? A potential line proposed during analysis by White, but it's just losing. Kxf7; EW: 5.d3!? suggested by my Stockfish but still no big deal) 5...Nc6]

5.Bxd5 exd5 6.d4 Nc6 7.0-0

[7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Qxd5 d6! 9.exd6
Bxd6±]

7...d6 8.exd6 Bxd6 9.Re1+

[EW: 9.c4!±]

9...Be6 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.Nbd2

EW: This looks like it could have come out of the Tarrasch French -- but where did White's bishop go? **11...0-0**

[11...Qb6! 12.Qe2 0-0 13.Nb3 d4
14.Nxc5 Qxc5±]

12.Nb3 Bd6 13.h3 Qc7 14.Be3 b6

Black should just gets rooks to the center. **15.Nbd4 Nxd4**

[15...Rfe8 16.Nb5]

16.Bxd4 Rae8 17.c3

[17.Be5!±]

17...Bf5! 18.Qa4 Qd7 EW: In general Black should prefer queens on in this structure.

[18...Rxe1+ 19.Rxe1 h6]

[18...Be4 19.Ng5 h6 20.Nxe4 dxe4
21.f3 f5]

19.Qxd7 Bxd7 20.Be5!±

EW: and White would like to see a knight on d4 vs. a (slightly, admittedly) bad bishop (thus this exchange). **20...Bxe5?!**
EW: And Black could keep the bishop.

[20...Be7 21.Rad1 Bc6]

[20...Bc5!? 21.b4 Be7 22.a4 a5]

21.Nxe5 Be6

[21...Re7 22.Nxd7 Rxd7]

22.Nf3

[22.Nc6 EW: of course]

22...h6 23.Nd4 Bd7 24.f3 Rxe1+

25.Rxe1 Re8 26.Rxe8+ Bxe8 27.b4?!

[27.Kf2 EW: White really wants her king on d4 and the knight attacking the pawn from e3.]

27...Kf8 28.Kf2 Bd7 EW: The standard theory is that if Black has only one weakness (d5 here), he should be able to draw.

[28...Ke7 29.Nf5+ Kf6]

29.g4 Ke7 30.Ke3 Kd6 31.h4 g5

32.hxg5 hxg5= 33.f4 f6 34.f5 Ke5

35.Nf3+ Kd6 36.Ne1 Bb5 37.Nc2?

Bc4! 38.a3

[38.Na3 Bxa2 39.Nb5+ Kd7

40.Nxa7 Bc4]

38...a5?

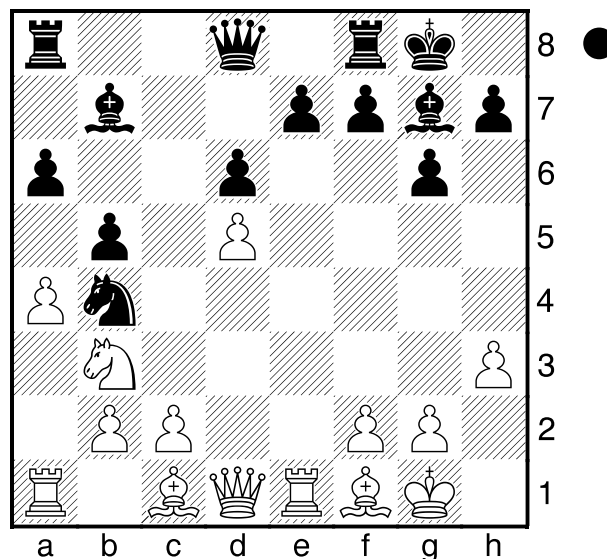
[38...Bb3! I did consider this move but it's still a close game if played well. I was scared of knight forks further down the line. 39.Nd4 This is the Stockfish line at depth 55: Bd1 40.Nb5+ Kd7 41.Nxa7 Bxg4 42.Nb5 Bd1 (42...Bxf5 43.a4 EW: now Bh3 44.a5 bxa5 45.bxa5 Bf1 46.Nd4 Ba6 might be the best try -- but

47.Nc2! holds) 43.Kf2 Ba4 44.Nd4
 Kd6 45.b5 Ke5 46.Kf3 Bd1+ 47.Ke3
 Kd6 48.Kd2 Ba4 49.Ke3 Kc5
 50.Ne6+ Kxb5 51.Kd4 Kc6 52.Ng7
 Bc2 53.Ne8 Bxf5 54.Nxf6 Be6
 55.Ke5 g4 56.Kxe6 g3 57.Ng4 g2
 58.Ne5+ Kb5 59.Nf3 Kc4 60.Ng1
 Kxc3 61.Kxd5 Kb3 62.Kc6 Kxa3
 63.Kb5 Kb3 64.Kxb6 Ka2 -0.46]
39.Kd4 Be2 40.Ne3 Bf3 41.c4 axb4
42.axb4
 1/2-1/2

□ **Yan,Ruiyang** **B70**
 ■ **Walder,Michael** **2357**
 2024 New Year TNM: 2000+ (1.1) 9.1.24
[Winslow,Elliott/Tactical Analysis 6.4]

Ruiyang is back in the TNM, and it's going to be tough for the rest of us. She and Dasika have some similarities of style, playing careful, positional chess, so their likely confrontation later in the tournament should be interesting. And I don't intend to be any pushover either. Mike prepared a transposition to the quieter Dragon lines and, as all too often, managed some advantage out of the opening, but was gradually outplayed, and fell apart later in the middlegame.
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Be2 g6 7.0-0 Bg7 8.Re1 0-0 9.Nb3 a6 10.h3 b5 11.Bf1 Bb7 12.Nd5 Nxd5! Already Black has the edge. **13.exd5 Nb4 14.a4!**

(Diagram)



bx a4?!N Black wins a pawn but comes under quite a bit of pressure. It might just not be worth it.

[Black had a slight advantage after 14...Nxd5 15.axb5 axb5 16.Rxa8 Qxa8! (16...Bxa8 17.Bxb5 e6 18.Be2 Qb8 19.Bf3 Rc8 20.c3 Be5 1/2-1/2 Needleman,A (2357)-Peralta,F (2549) San Luis zt 2.5 2007 (3)) 17.Bxb5 Nc7 18.Bf1 Ne6 with Black having slightly the better of it.]
 [There are also 14...Qd7!?]
 [and 14...Qc7!?]

15.Rxa4 Nxd5 16.Na5 Qd7 17.Ra3
 White has full compensation.

[17.c4!? Nf6 18.b4]
17...e6
 [17...Nf6!? doesn't weaken d6, and maintains some token advantage.]

18.Rd3 Bc8?!
 [18...Rad8 19.c4 Ne7]

19.b3 -0.17/37
 [19.Qd2! 0.30/35 is superior.]

19...Nc3 0.26/35
 [19...Qc7 -0.17/37 deserves consideration. 20.Nc4 Bc3]

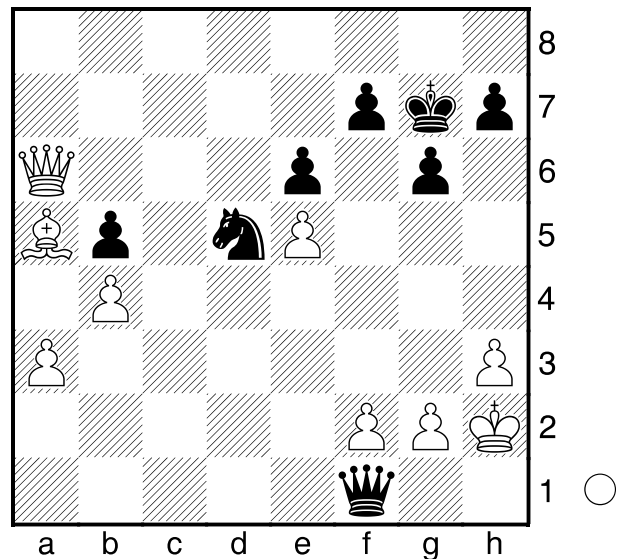
20.Qf3= Nd5 21.c4 Qc7? 0.94/32
 [21...Nb4!= 0.04/36 22.Qxa8 Nxd3 23.Bxd3 Bc3 recovers the piece, but still with no advantage.]

22.Bd2± Nb6! The only move **23.Bb4**
 White is much more active. The black
 rooks are passive. **23...Rd8?** 1.86/25
 [23...d5! 0.70/30 was necessary to
 activate the position, but White still
 has good play after 24.Rc1 (24.Bxf8
 is some plus as well) 24...Bh6 25.Rc2
 Bd7! 26.Bxf8 Bxf8 27.Rdd2 Qc5]
24.Qc6! Qa7?
 [24...Qxc6 25.Nxc6 Re8 26.Bxd6]
25.Bxd6
 [25.Bc5!]
1-0

Lewis,Edward
 Dasika,Archit
 2024 New Year TNM: 2000+ (1.2) 9.1.24
[Winslow,Elliott]

1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.h3 Bf5
 5.d4 e6 6.a3 Nbd7 7.cxd5 cxd5
 8.Bd3 Bxd3 9.Qxd3 Bd6 10.Nc3 a6
 11.0-0 0-0 12.Rd1 b5 13.e4 dxe4
 14.Nxe4 Nxe4 15.Qxe4 Nf6 16.Qe2
 Nd5 17.Ne5 Qe7 18.Bd2 Rfc8
 19.Rac1 Nb6 20.Ba5 Nd5 21.Qd2
 Qh4 22.Rxc8+ Rxc8 23.Rc1 Rxc1+
 24.Qxc1 g6 25.Qc8+ Kg7 26.Qxa6
 Bxe5 27.dxe5 Qa4 28.b4 Qd1+
 29.Kh2 Qf1!=

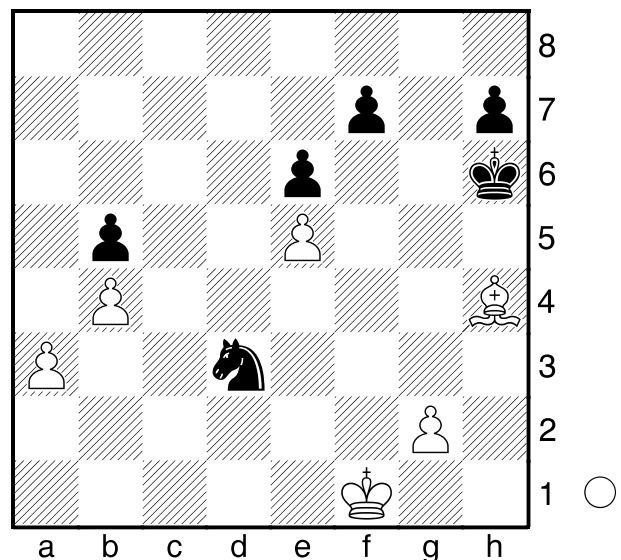
(Diagram)



Equal! **30.Bd8**

[Or 30.Bb6 Nf4 31.Qa8 Ne2 32.h4
 Qg1+ 33.Kh3 Qh1+ (33...h5
 34.g3=) 34.Kg4= White doesn't get
 mated!]

30...Nf4 31.Kg3 Nh5+ 32.Kh2 Qxf2
33.Bf6+ Kh6 34.Qc6 Qf4+ 35.Kg1
Qe3+ 36.Kh2 Qg3+ 37.Kg1 Nf4
38.Kf1 Qd3+ 39.Kf2 Qd2+ 40.Kf1
Qe3 41.Qc2 g5 42.h4 gxh4 43.Bxh4
Qd3+ 44.Qxd3 Nxd3

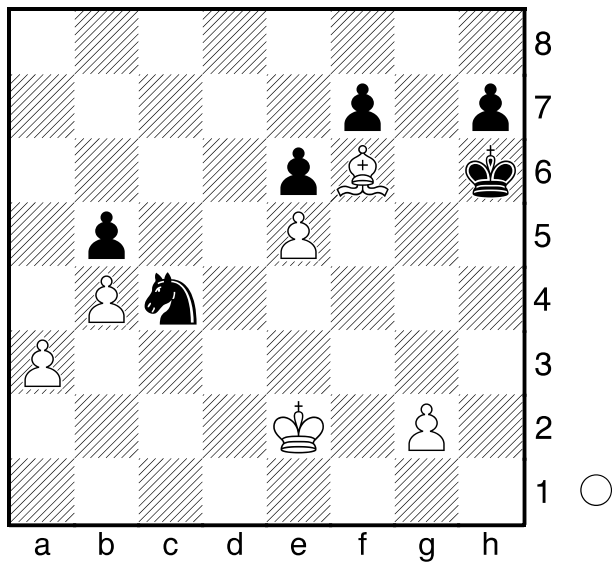


45.Bf6 Nb2?!

[45...Nf4! 46.Kf2 Nd5 47.Bd8 Kg6
 48.g4 f6!]

46.Ke2 Nc4

[46...Kh5 47.Kf3 Nc4 48.g4+ Kg6
49.Ke4 Nxa3=]



47.Kd3?

[47.g4!=]

47...Nxa3?

[47...Kh5!-+]

48.Kd4?

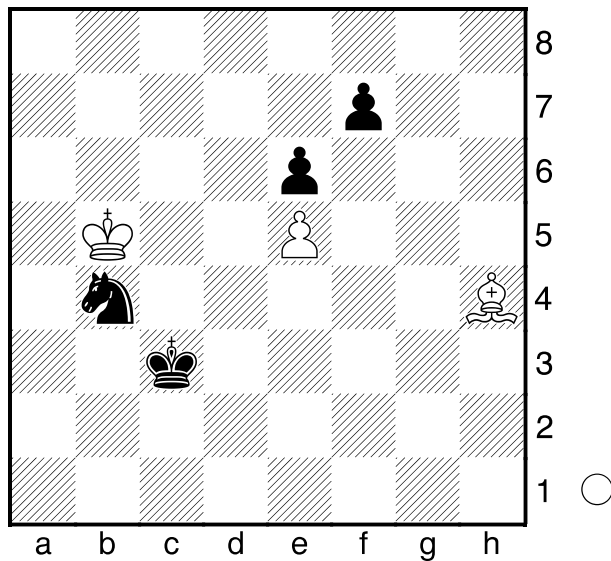
[48.g4=]

48...Kg6?

[48...Kh5-+]

49.g4!= h5 50.gxh5+ Kxh5 51.Kc5
Kg4 52.Be7 Kf4 53.Bd6 Ke4 54.Bc7
Kd3 55.Bd8 Nc4 56.Bc7 Na3 57.Bd8
Kc3 58.Bh4 Nc2 59.Kxb5 Nxb4

(Diagram)



60.Kc5

[60.Be1+ Kd4 61.Bxb4 Kxe5=]

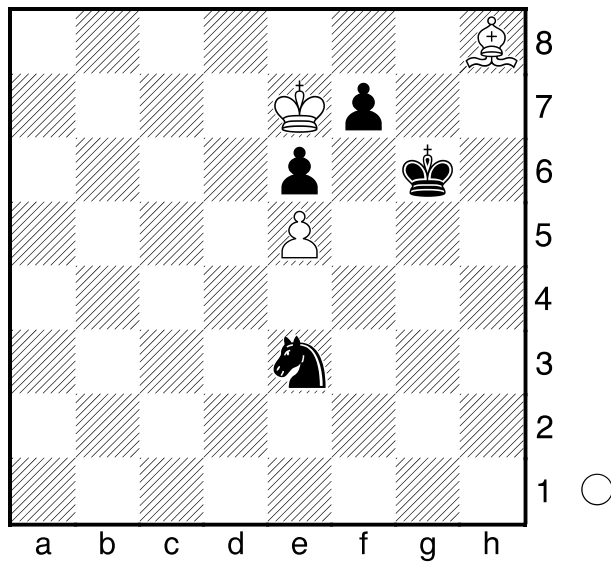
60...Nd3+ 61.Kd6 Kd4 62.Bf6 Ke4

63.Bg7 Kf5 64.Bf6 Nf2 65.Bh8 Ng4

66.Bg7 Kg6 67.Bh8 Kh7 68.Ke7 Nh6

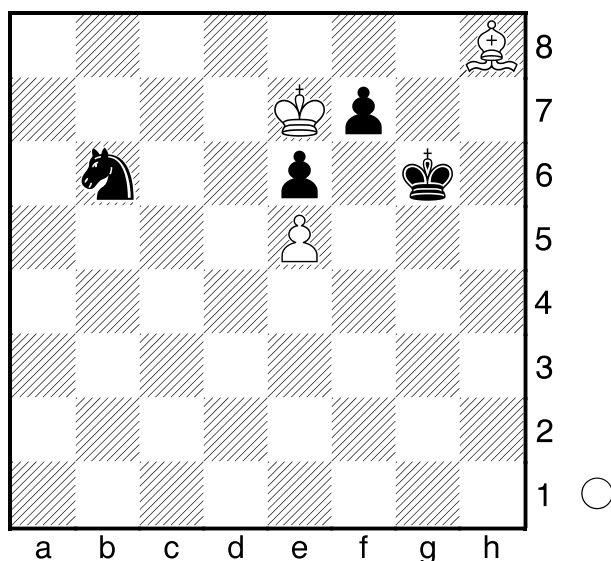
69.Bf6 Kg6 70.Kd7 Ng4 71.Bh8 Kf5

72.Kd6 Ne3 73.Ke7 Kg6



74.Kd6?? Nc4+?? 75.Ke7 Nb6

(Diagram)



76.Kd6??

[76.Ke8]

[76.Kf8]

76...Nd5 77.Kd7 Kh7 78.Ke8 Kxh8

79.Kxf7 Nf4 80.Kf6 Kg8

0-1

☐ Winslow, Elliott

D30

2182

Srinivasan, Sivavishnu

1903

2024 New Year TNM: 2000+ (1.3) 9.1.24

[Winslow, Elliott]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2

[4.d4 Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Be7

was his game with Dasika last TNM.]

4...c5

[I expected 4...dxc4 as in other
Catalans.]

5.cxd5 exd5

[5...Nxd5 is pretty interesting (I used to play the Black side of this), too.]

6.d4 And it's a Tarrasch QG. Without Nc3, which puts some spin on it. I think Avrukh liked it in his monumental 1.d4 series. **6...Nc6 7.0-0 Bg4?! Threw me for a temp loop but I saw a positional plan, which I see (now that I've researched the line, cart before the**

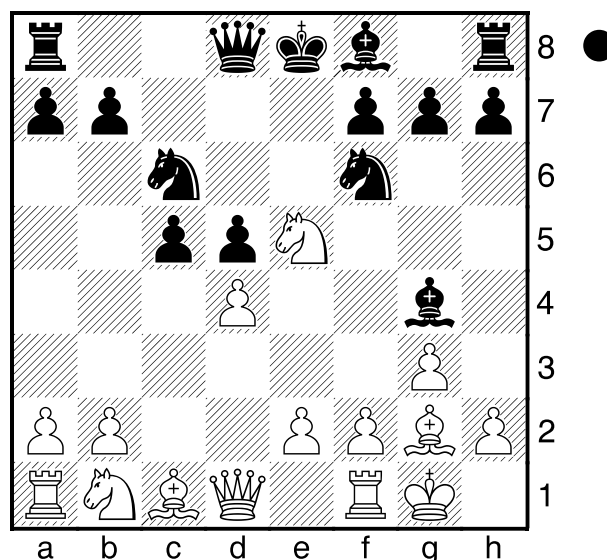
horse as usual for me these days) is What They Play. Good for me, sorta.

[7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 (Dubov's resuscitation, but with N/c3 and no 0-0) has *not* scored well this way. (8...Qb6!? however might fly.) 9.Nxc6! scores well in the 70% range (and 9.Nb3 less so but still)]

[So it's back to 7...Be7 8.Nc3 (Others!?) 0-0 The Orthodox Tarrasch Defense. All those Karpov-Kasparov games before the younger player sweated himself into shape (while playing a World Champion match!).]

8.Ne5!?

[But Stockfish is pretty adamant about 8.Be3 (which does score well, though rarely played). But one nice aspect of 8.Ne5 -- Black has a bewildering selection of responses!]



Far and away favored, by A-players to 2600s (nobody higher has seen 7...Bg4).

8...Bh5 This does keep the pressure on e2, but that could be "Bishop on the Rim is Dim" (or is that --) (On this note, has anyone besides me read (I have a ways to go to finish) "Under the Surface" by Jan Markos (Slovak GM), the chapter "Anatoly Karpov's Billiard Balls"?? It's

especially curious, but the whole book is quite interesting. I have it on my phone through Forward Chess, will get through it all after a few more BART rides.

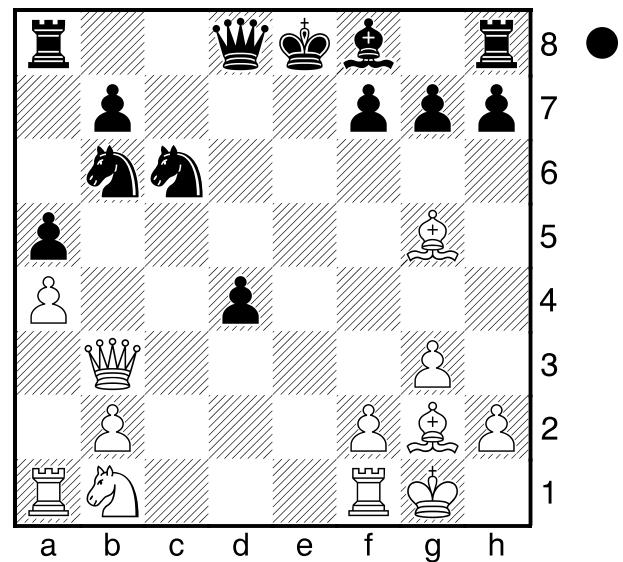
[The initial appearance of the bishop out was in -- 1947! It did not fare well: 8...h5 (suspect!) 9.Qa4 Bd7 (but at least it kept the retreat option open) 10.Nxd7 Qxd7 11.dxc5 Bxc5 12.Bg5 Ng4 13.Nc3 f6 14.Bd2 Qf5 15.Qf4 Qxf4 16.Bxf4 g5 17.Bd2 h4 18.Nxd5 hxg3 19.hxg3 Nd4 20.Bf3 Nxf3+ 21.exf3 Nxf2 22.Be3 Bxe3 23.Nxe3 Nd3 24.Nd5 0-0-0 25.Nxf6 Nxb2 26.Rac1+ Kb8 27.Ne4 Rh6 28.Kg2 b5 29.Rh1 Ra6 30.Rc2 Nc4 31.Re2 Re8 32.g4 Rae6 33.Rh5 Re5 34.Kf2 Nd6 35.Rxg5 Nxe4+ 36.Rxe4 Rxe4 37.Rxb5+ Kc7 38.fxe4 Rxe4 39.Kf3 Ra4 40.Rb2 Kd7 41.Re2 1-0 Golombek,H-Abrahams,G British CF-34 Championship Harrogate/ North Yorkshire 1947 (9)]

[For a while they played 8...Bf5 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.Nc3 (The earliest occasion (after Golombek-Abrahams) was **this** game: 10.Be3 Qa5 11.Nd2 Qb4 12.dxc5 Qxb2 13.Nc4 Qb5 14.Ne5 Be7 15.a4 Qa6 16.Qd4 0-0 17.g4 Be6 18.h3 Nd7 19.Nxd7 Bxd7 20.Ra2 Bf6 21.Qd2 ½-½ Coosemans, B-Walsh,J World U20-ch01 Birmingham 1951 (3)) 10...Be7 11.Qa4 Qd7 12.dxc5 Bxc5 13.e4 Be6 14.Bg5 Rd8 15.e5 h6 16.Bh4 g5 17.exf6 Rb8 18.b3 gxh4 19.Qxh4 Rb4 20.Qh5 Bd4 21.Qf3 Qd8 22.Rac1 Qxf6 23.Qd3 0-0 24.Ne2 c5 25.a3 Rb6 26.b4 Rc8 27.Nxd4 cxd4 28.Rxc8+ Bxc8 29.Rd1 Rc6 30.Bxd5 Rd6 31.Be4 Bg4 32.f3 Bd7 33.b5 h5 34.h4 Qe5 35.f4 Qc5 36.a4 Be6 37.f5 Bc4 38.Qd2 d3+ 39.Kh2 Kf8 40.Rc1 Qd4 41.Re1 Bd5 42.Bxd5 Qxd5

43.Rf1 Qc4 44.f6 Qc2 45.Rf2 Qxd2 46.Rxd2 Kg8 47.Kg2 Kh7 48.Kf3 a6 49.Ke4 axb5 50.axb5 Rb6 51.Rxd3 Rxb5 52.Rd5 Rb4+ 53.Kf5 Rb3 54.Kf4 Kh6 55.Rg5 Rb6 56.Rf5 Kg6 57.Rg5+ Kh6 ½-½ Barle,J-Beliavsky, A Niemeyer U21-09 Final A Groningen 1970 (5)]

[8...Be6 has settled in as the Main Line, but I'm not convinced.]

[My main concern was 8...cxd4 9.Nxg4 Nxg4 but Stockfish assures me that 10.e4! works (10.e3 is pretty good too, just not as good) 10...Nf6 11.exd5 Nxd5 12.Qb3+- is actually too much for Black -- Nb6 13.a4! a5 14.Bg5!]



Be7 (14...Qxg5 15.Qxb6) 15.Bxe7 Kxe7 (15...Nxe7 16.Qb5+) and now the Romantic 16.Nc3!+- I'll leave it to the Max Lange players among us to figure out why Stockfish thinks **this** works.]

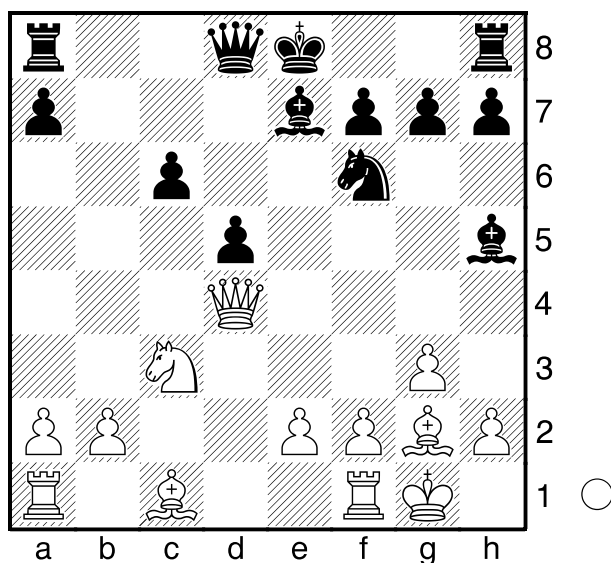
[8...Nxd4?? 9.Nxg4 Nxg4 10.e3]

9.Nc3

[Comp: simply 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.Qa4 (10.Qc2) 10...Qd7 11.Bg5 Be7 (11...Ne4? 12.Bxe4 dxe4 13.dxc5+-) 12.dxc5 0-0 13.Nc3±]

9...cxd4

[9...Be7±]
10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Qxd4 Be7!



12.e4! More heroic than something snively like

[12.Qa4 Rc8 13.Qxa7 which Stockfish rates about the same.]

12...dxe4 13.Qc4

[13.Qa4!]

13...c5?! Daring me to get excited about some BxRa8 in the near future?

[13...0-0 14.Nxe4 is in the +0.43-0.47 range after a lot of moves by Black.]

14.Nxe4 Nxe4?! More sliding, this time serious.

[14...0-0 15.Nxf6+ Bxf6 16.Qxc5!± takes advantage of that bishop on h5. Reminds me of the 4.Nf3 Bg4 line of the Alekhine Defense.]

15.Bxe4+-

[15.Qxe4! 0-0 (15...Rb8 16.Bf4 Rxb2 17.Qe5 woops) 16.Qxa8 Qxa8 17.Bxa8 Rxa8 18.Bd2+- with no queens the LSB won't be as missed.]

15...Rc8

[I'd try 15...0-0 but 16.Bxa8 Qxa8 17.Bd2 Bf3 18.Rfe1 Bf6 19.Bc3 Bh1 20.Qf1 Queasy, but winning (if you're a computer maybe).]

16.Qa4+- I thought this *had* to win (king on f8??) but it's not the best!?

[16.Bf4 0-0 17.Bb7+- Stockfish wants that rook!]

16...Kf8

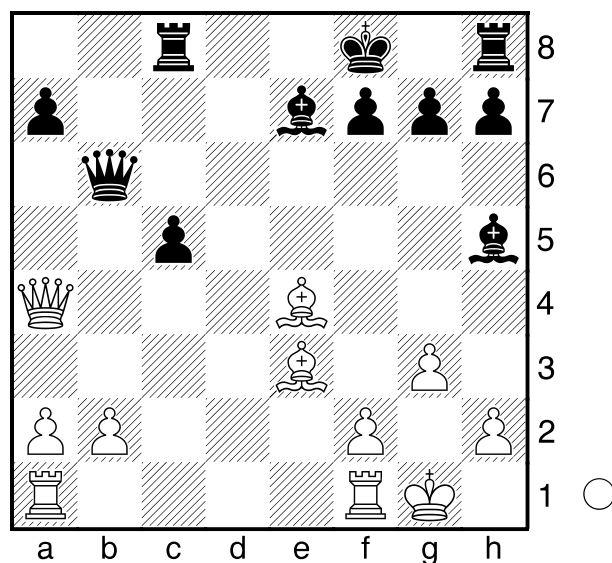
[16...Qd7 17.Qxd7+ Kxd7 18.Bf5+]

17.Be3

[17.Qa6! actually makes sense, given how the game went.]

17...Qb6

[17...g5!? It's still +-, but you have to appreciate the logic: someplace for the king, but giving the B/h5 g6 if it needs to survive some g4 hit.]



18.b3?± Innocuous but drops a chunk of advantage. I saw what was coming, and I don't mind a little complication. But -- well, one of my favorite self-deprecating exercises when I hit a clunker is to tap the "+" button in the engine window. I usually run Stockfish 16 with five or six lines, but I do wonder: how bad *was* my move? On this occasion: 14th best. Ten or eleven moves get a "+-" (winning), and a couple more slightly better than my move. As I say, I saw his next move but thought it would be "fun"...

[18.Rfe1+- 2nd best;]

[18.Rfc1!+- would have been "better"

complications.]

18...Be2 and he played it! But maybe it's not the best.

[Stockfish still elects 18...g5!
the only move not flat-out losing.
(when 19.Bf5! is my best)]

19.Rfe1! Bb5 20.Qa3 g6?! And this is
tenth best by the computer, although
he's just lost.

[20...h5!? 21.b4 h4!? 22.bxc5 Qc7
23.Qb3 hxc3 24.Qxb5! does get
crazy!]

21.Rac1?± And again: dicing a big chunk
off my plus, and he might well be able to
hold -- if he can keep it together.

[Here also quite a list of winners
instead, with the leader by a length:
21.Bh6+!+- Kg8 22.Bd5 It's quite won.
I was concerned with

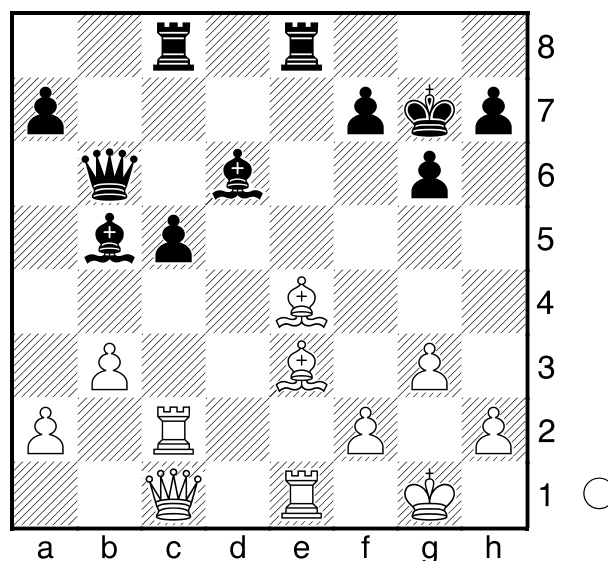
A) 22...Bf8 is a better but
insufficient try: 23.Bxf8 Kxf8
(23...Rxf8 24.Rac1 h5 25.h4
and Qxc5 or Re7) 24.Qb2 Rg8
25.a4 Bc6 26.Bc4 Bb7 27.Rad1
Qc6 28.Bd5;

B) 22...Bf6 23.b4!! suddenly
exposes Black's king. I didn't see
anything like Bxa1? 24.Bxf7+! Kxf7
25.Qf3+! and 26.Qd5+, mate
follows.]

21...Kg7! It's back to the drawing board,
but I do still have solid positional
plusses. **22.Rc2!** With some nice
designs **22...Rhe8!** I saw this, and
rather hoped he wouldn't. **23.Qc1! Bd6?**

[23...Bf8 24.Bd5 (24.b4? Rxe4!
25.Bh6+ Kg8 26.Rxe4 Bd3=)
24...Kg8 25.Rd1 Red8 26.Rcd2±]

(Diagram)



24.b4! Qa6?!]

[24...Re5]

25.bxc5+- Ba4? 26.cxd6

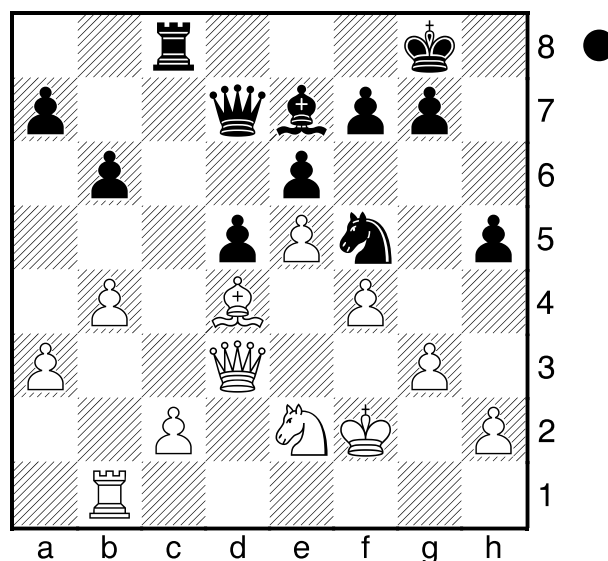
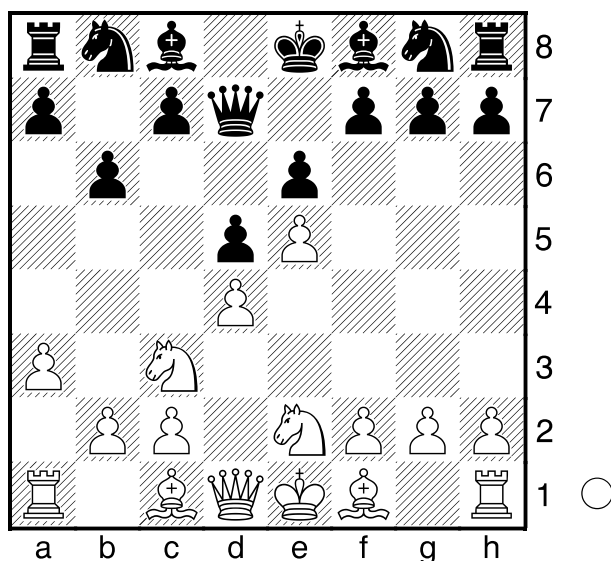
[26.Bh6+! Stockfish actually sees
mate in 10.]

1-0

C16
1900
Riese, Kayven
2145
Diller, Bradley R
2024 New Year TNM: 2000+ (1.4) 9.1.24
[Diller, Bradley R]

EW: Brad Diller is back again, this time
in control against Kayven Riese. White
never quite seems to have his game in
order. **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4**
4.e5 Qd7 EW: This whole system in the
Winawer French is baffling -- Black steps
out of the way and lets White "gain
space" but weaken squares. **5.Nge2 b6**
6.a3 Bf8

(Diagram)



7.b4N This has got to be an overreaction. The computer makes White even, but in practice it's too easy to just end up with holes.

[7.Nf4±]

[Predecessor: 7.h4 Ba6 8.h5 c5 9.h6 Nxh6 10.Bxh6 gxh6 11.Nf4 Bxf1 12.Kxf1 Nc6 13.Nce2 cxd4 14.Nxd4 Nxe5 Black grabs pawns, but 1-0 73, Gukesh,D (2563)-Maghsoodloo,P (2676) Chartres Blitz Europe Echecs INT 2020 (14)]

7...Ba6= 8.Rb1 Bc4

[8...c5!=]

9.g3

[White should try 9.Nf4±]

9...c5!± 10.Be3 cxd4 11.Nxd4

Bxc4 would now be deadly. **11...Bxf1**

12.Kxf1 Nc6 13.f4 Nxd4 14.Bxd4 Ne7

15.Qd3 Nf5 16.Ne2 h5 17.Kf2 Rc8

18.Rb3 Be7 19.Rhb1 0-0 20.Rc3

Rxc3 21.Bxc3 Rc8 22.Bd4

[22.Nd4±]

(Diagram)

22...Qc6

[Δ22...Qa4! 23.Rb3 Rc4]

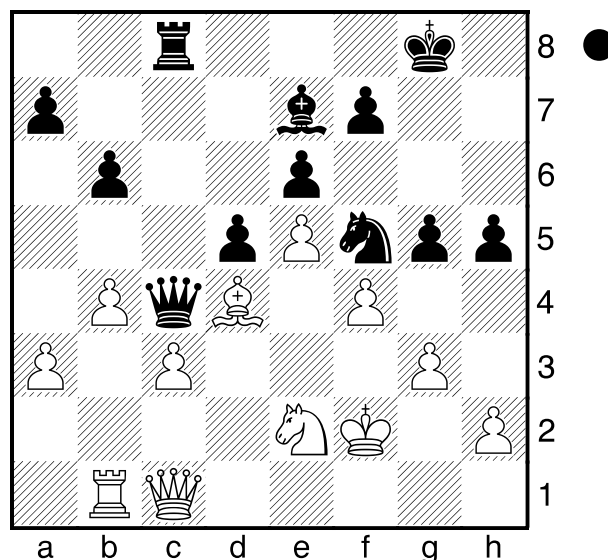
23.c3± Qa4 24.Ra1 Qb3 25.Qd1 Qc4

Black has more active pieces. **26.Rb1**

[26.Qd2±]

26...g5 27.Qc1

[27.Qb3±]



27...g4!-+ 28.Qd2 White is weak on the light squares **28...Kg7 29.Ra1**

[Δ29.Qd1]

29...h4 30.Rg1



[Δ30.gxh4 Bxh4+ 31.Kf1]

30...hxg3+ 31.hxg3 Rh8 Wards off Rh1

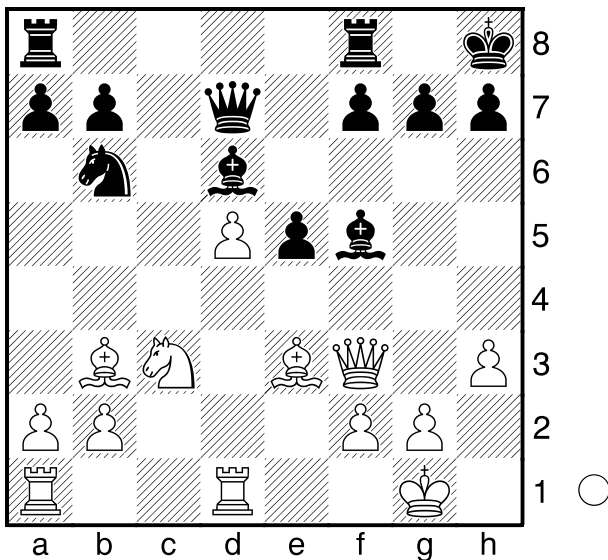
32.Rg2 Qb3

[Not 32...Rh1 33.Rg1 Rh3
(33...Rh2+? 34.Rg2-+) 34.Kg2+]

33.Qc1 Rh3 34.Qa1 Qc2 Strongly
threatening ...Nxg3! **35.Qg1 Nh4**
0-1

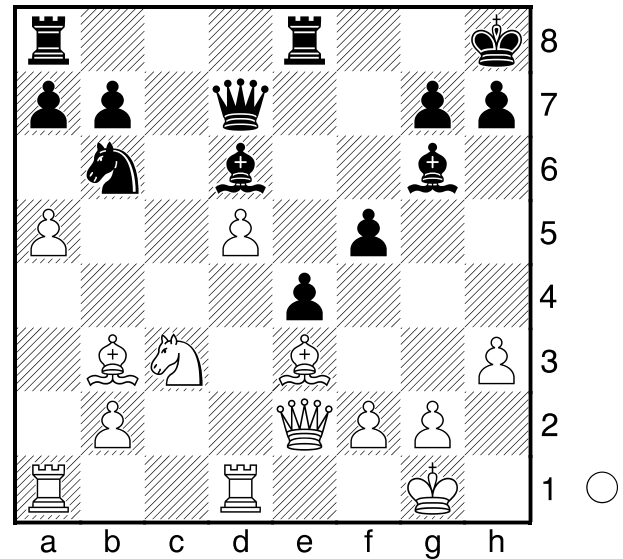
 **Bambou,Christophe** **B22**
 **Wu,Zhuoyuan** **2129**
2024 New Year TNM: 2000+ (1.5) **1861**
[Winslow,Elliott]

1.e4 c5 2.c3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.Nf3
Nc6 5.Bc4 Nb6 6.Bb3 d6 7.exd6
Qxd6 8.0-0 Bf5 9.d4 cxd4 10.Nxd4
Nxd4 11.cxd4 e6 12.Nc3 Be7 13.Qf3
0-0 14.Rd1 Qd7 15.h3 Bd6 16.Be3
Kh8 17.d5
[17.a4!]
17...e5

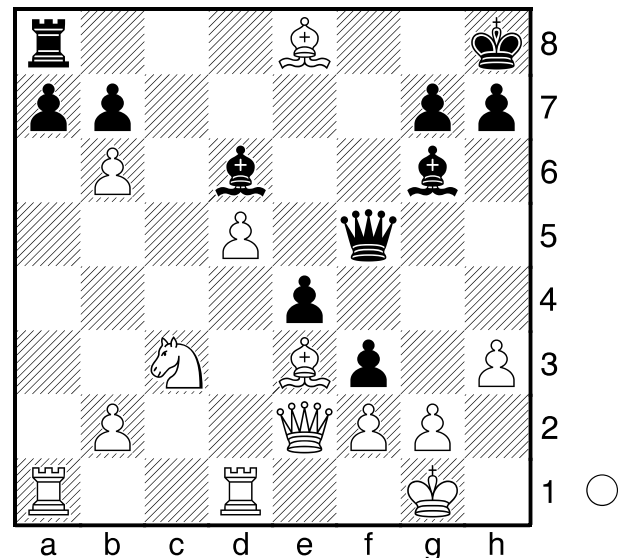


18.a4!± Rfe8 19.a5 e4 20.Qh5 Bg6
21.Qe2 f5

(Diagram)

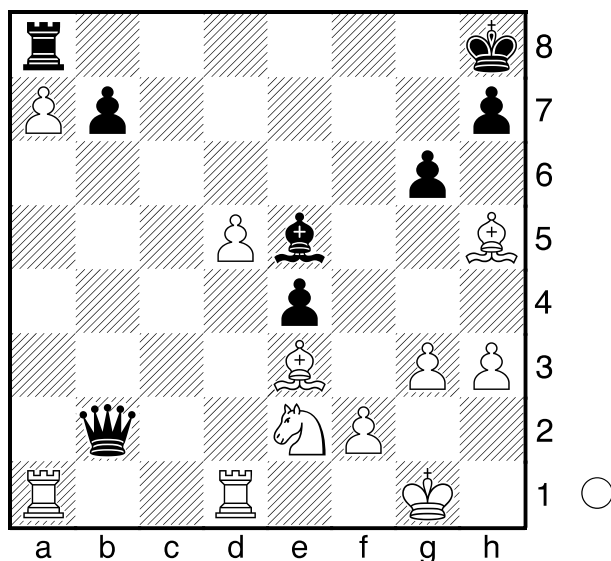


22.axb6 f4 23.Ba4 Qf5 24.Bxe8 f3
Zhuoyuan throws a "Hail Mary" but he's
just down too much and there's no mate
if White defends carefully.

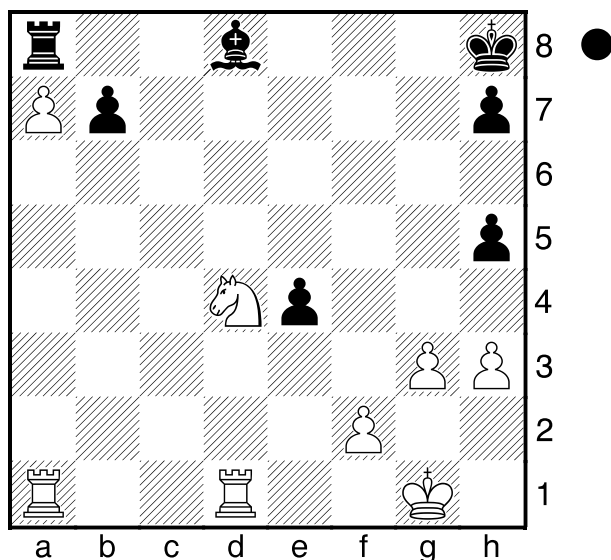


25.Bxg6 Adding an element of
unnecessary drama. Most queen moves
(c4, b5, c2, f1) would win "simply."
25...Qe5 Christophe forgot about this!
Fortunately for him it's still a win. **26.g3**
[26.Bf4! Qxf4 27.g3 fxe2 28.gxf4
exd1Q+ 29.Rxd1 (29.Nxd1)
29...hxg6 30.Nxe4 is Stockfish's
favorite continuation.]
26...fxe2 27.Nxe2

[27.Re1! hxg6 28.bxa7]
27...Qxb2?!
 [27...hxg6 28.bxa7 Qf5]
28.Bh5
 [28.Rxa7!]
28...Be5?! 29.bxa7 g6



30.d6! gxh5 31.d7 Bf6 32.d8Q+
 [32.Rac1!]
32...Bxd8 33.Bd4+ Qxd4 34.Nxd4+-



That pawn on a7 is just too big a threat to queen. **34...h4 35.g4 Bb6 36.Nb5 h5 37.g5 e3 38.fxe3 Bxe3+ 39.Kg2 Bxa7 40.Rxa7 Rc8 41.Rd2 Re8 42.Nd4 Re7 43.Nf5 Rf7 44.Nxh4 Rg7**

45.g6 Rg8 46.Rd7 Rg7 47.Ra8+ Rg8 48.Rh7# 1-0

E90
1661

Yan,Rayna

Vandenhoven,Clarke Raymond

2024 New Year TNM: 1600-1999 (1.13)

[Vandenhoven,Clarke Raymond]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Bd3 e5 7.0-0?!

I don't like this move for White since it sends the game into a better version of the mainline for Black.

[7.d5 Transposing back into a Petrosian system. a5 8.h3 Na6 9.0-0 Nc5 10.Bc2 Nh5 11.Bg5 Qe8= Black has equalized and will play for f5.]

7...Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.b4 Nd7

I spent 4 minutes here trying to find a difference between Nd7 and Ne8, and decided on Nd7 since it 1. prevents the immediate c5 2. Invites Be3, which gives Black a very nice position.

[9...Ne8]

[9...a5 I also considered this move, but felt it was premature - idea I've seen before to stop White's Q-side advance in its tracks, but the advance isn't scary yet.]

10.a3? This move doesn't accomplish anything for White, they should instead be developing their pieces with Be3 and Rc1.

[10.Be3? f5 11.exf5 gxf5=

Conversely, here Black is a bit better because of their better pieces and control of the centre. Black can choose to play f4, e4, or slow play with Ng6 + Nf6. (11...e4? 12.Nxe4 Bxa1 13.Qxa1 Nxf5± If you had an extra tempo to take the bishop here, Black would be clearly better, however,

14.Bg5 And the house comes crashing down.) 12.Ng5 White's best source of counter play.]

[10.Nd2]

10...f5 11.exf5??-+

[11.Ng5 Probably White's best try in the position? Nf6 12.c5 h6∞ (12...Nfxd5? 13.Qb3!) 13.cxd6 cxd6 14.Nf3 fxe4 15.Nxe4 Bf5 16.Nxf6+ Rxf6 With a game of chess to be played!]

11...e4! Winning a piece, thanks to White's many hanging pieces. **12.f6 Bxf6 13.Bh6 Bxc3** And we win the capture chain. **14.Bxf8**

[14.Bxe4 Bxa1 15.Bxf8 Qxf8 16.Qxa1]

14...Bxa1 15.Bxe7

[15.Qxa1 Qxf8]

15...Qxe7 16.Re1 Bg7 And we get the tempo to save the piece. **17.Rxe4 Qf6** [17...Qf7 Spent a while in this position considering my options, ended up rejecting this because 18.Ng5 Qf6 19.Re8+ Nf8 20.Ne6⇒ Felt like too much counterplay to give up! Bxe6 21.Rxa8 The point.]

18.Re8+ Kf7 19.Re6 Qa1 Forcing the bishop to move, winning a tempo.

20.Ng5+ Kg8 21.Bb1 Nf8! I was really proud of this move, because it solved any tactical problems I might have had with the knight disconnecting the bishop & queen, and it protects h7 from knight sacs. **22.Re8 Bg4!** A nice little tactic to increase my material advantage.

23.Rxf8+

[23.Qxg4?? Qxb1+ 24.Qd1 Qxd1+ 25.Re1 Qxe1#]

23...Rxf8 And the bishop is still untouchable :) **24.Qe1 Bf5 25.Ne4 Qd4**

[25...Re8?! Unnecessarily complicated. 26.Nf6+ Bxf6 27.Qxe8+ Kg7-+ but it still works.]

26.h3 Bxe4 27.Bxe4 Re8 28.Qc1

Qxe4 29.Qg5 Qe1+ And now a nice mating sequence. 30.Kh2 Be5+ 31.f4 Bd4 32.h4 Bg1+ 33.Kh1 Bf2+ 34.Kh2 Qg1+ 35.Kh3 Re3+ 36.Kg4 Qd1#

[36...Rg3# Also mate.]

0-1

D31

1344

1500

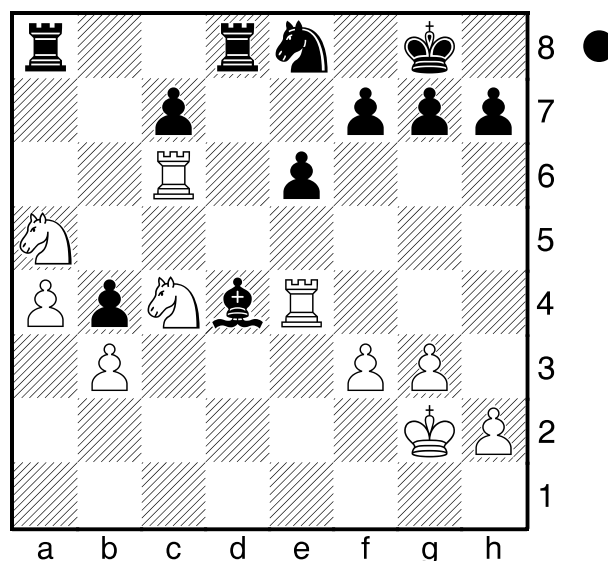
□ **Fisher,Brett**

■ **Starr,Albert Martin**

2024 New Year TNM: 1200-1599 (1.15)

[Winslow,Elliott]

Albert Starr tumbles a bit but comes out on top. Fisher just didn't quite untangle his "connected" (that's not necessarily a good thing) knights. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 a6** The Old/New Janowski Queen's Gambit! **4.Nf3 dxc4 5.e4 b5 6.a4 b4 7.Na2 Bb7 8.Bxc4 Bxe4 9.Be2 Nf6 10.0-0 Be7 11.Bd2 a5 12.Re1 0-0 13.Bf4 Nd5 14.Bg3 Nd7 15.Nc1 N7f6 16.Nb3 Nh5 17.Ne5 Nxc3 18.fxc3 Nf6 19.Bf3 Bxf3 20.Qxf3 Qd5 21.Rac1 Qxf3 22.gxf3 Bd6 23.Rc6 Rfd8 24.Nc4 Ne8 25.Nbxa5 Be7 26.Re4 Bf6 27.b3 Bxd4+ 28.Kg2**



Bc3

[28...Rd5-+]
29.Nb7 Rd1 30.Ne5? f6?
[30...Ra7 31.Nc5 Bxe5 32.Rxe5
Rd2+ 33.Kf1 Rd6!]
31.Nd7?
[31.Nc4! e5! 32.Nc5 Nd6 33.Rh4
Nf5]
31...Rxd7 32.Rcxe6 Nd6 33.Nxd6
Rxd6 34.Re7 c5 35.Rc7 f5 36.Ree7
Bf6 37.Re2 Rd3 38.Rxc5 Rxb3 39.a5
Rb2
[39...Ra3]
40.Rxb2 Bxb2 41.Rxf5 Ra6 42.Rb5
Bc3 43.f4 Kf7 44.Kf3 Re6 45.Rb7+
Ke8 46.f5 Re7 47.Rb6 Kd8 48.a6
Kc8 49.Rc6+ Kb8 50.g4 Ka7 51.g5
Re1 52.Kf2 Ra1 53.f6 gxf6 54.gxf6
Bxf6 55.Rxf6 Rxa6
[55...b3!]
56.Rf7+ Kb6 57.Rxh7 b3 58.Rh6+
Kb5 59.Rh5+ Kc4 60.Rh8 Rb6
61.Rc8+ Kd3 62.Rc1 b2 63.Rb1 Kc2
64.Re1 b1Q 65.Rxb1 Rxb1 66.Kg2
Kd3 67.h4 Rb5 68.Kf3 Kd4 69.Kg4
Ke5 70.Kg5 Ke6+ 71.Kg6 Ke7 72.h5
Kf8 73.h6 Kg8
0-1

Abhishek Handigol

My Journey to National Master

A month ago, while traveling to New York on a break from tournament chess, I got a rather vague email from USCF saying "Congratulations! Your recent tournament performances have earned you one or more new milestones or norms towards your next norms-based title: National Master." Confused, I opened up my USCF profile, and was extremely shocked to see "National Master Certificate: Earned in 2023". As far as I knew, my highest rating was 2192, and I had dropped since then, but I looked at my tournament history and saw the event got re-rated to 2201! I was in shock. After 10 years of struggling in the 2000-2200 range, wanting to quit multiple times (and it would have probably been better for my sanity if I had), I had finally gotten the elusive National Master title. In this article, I will share the story of how I overcame the infamous 2000-2199 plateau.

After graduating college in 2021, a friend of mine at the UC Davis chess club convinced me to try again for the NM title. I wasn't sure at first, since I still had bad memories of my earlier struggles with OTB chess, but I decided to try it out in the end. My first tournament back to chess was the US Amateur Team West Championship. I was definitely nervous since I hadn't played seriously in around three years because of the pandemic. Especially on my openings, I had no idea what to play since I hadn't been studying theory. I searched Chessable for a system opening with white and found an interesting one with the moves 1. Nf3 and 2. e3, and decided to try it out. I ended up playing a great game which really boosted my confidence, Game 1 vs Zhang (2162) below.

My new rating was 2124, so I thought it can't be too long before I reach NM, right? Boy, was I wrong! Five months later, I started playing again, but I had a couple of disappointing performances. I got a coach and took a couple of classes to figure out where I can improve. Surprisingly, he said that my weaknesses were not chess-related, they were more psychological! A lot of the time I would know the right move to play, but I would second-guess myself, overthink and play something else instead. So I needed to work on my confidence! Here is an example, Game 2 vs Qin (2117) below.

I thought, maybe I need to play more tournaments to build confidence. So I tried playing a lot, almost every week in fact, since I thought I could play myself into shape. I was also determined to get NM by the end of 2022. This was definitely a mistake, especially since I wasn't improving, since it takes a while for improvement to actually show in my play. I was also getting frustrated, since I'd hear similar feedback after almost every game that I was either overthinking, or seeing ghosts. So I decided to take a 3-month break from chess and start again in 2023. I did end up playing some nice games though, one of which I wanted to show here, Game 3 vs Zhou (2052) below.

At the start of this year, I was playing a bit better than last year; I did more work on my openings, I was not second-guessing myself anymore, but I still wasn't improving. My coach told me I would play most games really well, but I would make some decisions in those games that weren't practical. For example, when I had a clear advantage, I would try to win quickly and lose my advantage. Time management was also a huge issue in my games; I would either get confused in the opening and spend time, or take too long on trivial moves in the middlegame and end up in time pressure later. It is also pretty difficult to play on weekends sometimes, especially with a 9-5 job, so this could also be a

reason why I didn't improve that much (simply because of fatigue and stress). I did play one quick knockout that I wanted to show here, Game 4 vs Rajaram (2099) below.

After taking another break and going on vacation, I was ready to play OTB again. I played in the National Open in June, hoping to win the U2100 section. Sadly, I fell sick during the tournament. After a rocky start in the 4-day section, I reentered the 2-day section and started 4-0 before losing a heartbreaking game up a piece in time pressure. Although I didn't win first, I definitely think this tournament is where I started to improve. I implemented three things that I think really made the difference in my tournament performances:

1. I noticed that I played a lot better in shorter time controls than longer ones, probably since I'm more of an intuitive player, so I tried to play in more of those tournaments.
2. I realized that I had huge issues with nerves, especially in time trouble, so I learned a couple of breathing techniques that I can use during the games (like the 4-7-8 breathing technique). I would also do a short meditation (~5 minutes) right before each game.
3. Since I noticed I was making recurring mistakes, every time I learned something from my coach or from a blog I would put it in my notes app, and make sure to read it right before each game. Some examples would be "Slow down in the opening" or "Don't rush in winning positions".

I also became pretty good at coming back from worse or losing positions, simply because I kept looking for chances. I would change my mindset from "Let me try to win" to "I'll probably lose if my opponent plays perfectly, but let's at least make it difficult for them". I think this alone also helped my results a lot too.

Here are a couple such examples, Game 5 vs Chakraborty (2281) and Game 6 vs Hamedani (1900) below.

Suddenly, I was back at 2130! As long as my rating was going up, I would keep playing consistently in order to keep the momentum going. I figured if I play enough while I'm in good form, I should hit 2200 eventually. Apart from analyzing my games, I didn't do much work on chess, except maybe some puzzles here and there and reviewing openings. I did pretty well in the next few tournaments, beating some strong players and breaking 2200 (after the re-rate).

I'll show some key games here, Game 7 vs Qin (2029), Game 8 vs Wang (2191), Game 9 vs Kagle (1991), Game 10 vs Shrauger (2062), and Game 11 vs Dasika (2224) below.

Thanks for reading! I hope reading this helps your chess, or at least inspires you to keep persevering towards your next rating goal. Also, I would like to thank Mechanics' Chess Club for hosting so many great and affordable tournaments, and for giving me the opportunity to write for the newsletter.

1

A06

Handigol, Abhishek

2102

Zhang, Nathaniel

2162

US Amateur Team West Championship

1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.b3 c5 4.Bb2

Nc6 This is the most common approach, with black trying to play as if they were white, but the problem is that they're not :)

5.Bb5 e6 6.Bxc6+ Not forced, I could wait for a6, but more likely that black will play Bd7 **6...bxc6**

double-edged. Black has a broken structure, but the bishop pair can become active **7.Ne5 Bd6 8.f4**

trying to clamp down on the position

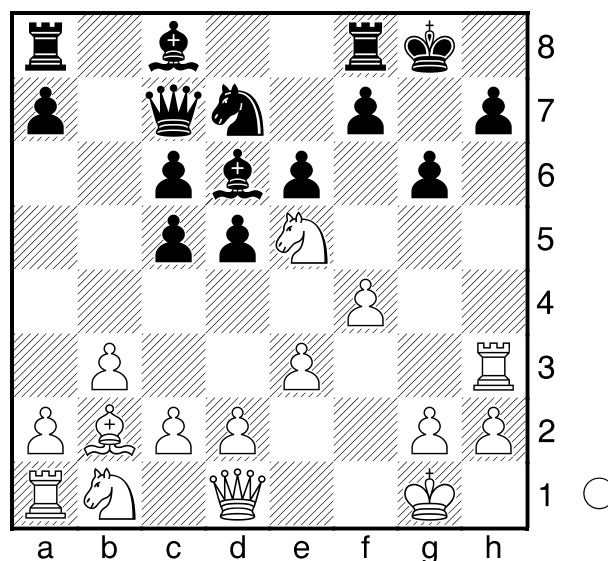
8...Qc7 9.0-0 0-0 10.Rf3!? It's a bit direct, but I thought this was an aggressive approach

[10.d3 probably this is the better way to play it, bringing the other knight to f3 and mobilizing slowly]

10...Nd7 11.Rh3 protecting the pawn because of Qh5, here black has to play f5 or f6 **11...g6??**

[11...f5 trying to lock the position, but my bishop on b2 is still uninhibited
12.Nxd7 Qxd7 13.Qh5 g6 14.Qh4±
I would definitely take white even though I haven't finished development because the bishop on b2 is extremely strong]

(Diagram)



stopping Qh5...or does it? **12.Qh5!!**

Nope! I played this almost instantly and my opponent was shocked. So were his teammates :) **12...Nf6**

[12...gxh5? 13.Rg3+ Kh8 14.Nxf7# double checkmate!]

13.Qh4? not the best followup

[13.Ng4!! I considered this but I didn't see the knockout blow, but white wins the queen back at least so I should have gone for this gxh5 14.Nxf6+

A) 14...Kg7 what I also didn't see is that white has forced mate here!

15.Ne8+ Kh6 (15...Kg6 16.Rg3+ Kf5 17.Ng7+ Ke4 18.d3#)

16.Bg7+ Kg6 17.Rg3+ Kf5

18.Rg5+ Ke4 19.Nc3# would have been a nice finish!;

B) 14...Kh8 15.Rxh5 h6 16.Nxd5+ Kh7 17.Nxc7 Bxc7 18.Rxc5+-]

[13.Qh6! would also keep the pressure]

13...h5?? misses a chance. black thought he can trap my queen, but I have a nice resource to get out of it

[13...d4! the long diagonal needs to be closed at all costs 14.exd4

white is still winning but the knight on f6 holds everything]

14.Qxf6 Be7 oh no! my queen is

trapped! **15.Nd7!!** nope! second queen sacrifice! **15...d4**

[15...Bxf6 16.Nxf6+ Kh8 17.Nxd5+ e5 18.Nxc7 Rb8 (18...Bxh3 19.Nxa8 Bxg2 20.Kxg2 Rxa8 21.Bxe5+- white is up 2 pieces) 19.Rf3+- white is still up two pieces]

16.Qxe7 Bxd7 Now I'm up a piece and should convert **17.exd4 e5 18.Rh4 Rfe8 19.Qg5 exd4 20.Na3** clearing the back rank **20...Re2 21.Qxc5 Rxd2 22.Nc4**
1-0

2

□ **Handigol, Abhishek**
■ **Qin, Vincent**
BAC Class Championship

A45
2105
2117
2022

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.Bf4 Be7?

Black is going out of his way to avoid any mainline.

[3...d5 transposes to the 3...e6 line 4.Nb5]

4.e3

[4.e4 why not take the center when I'm given the chance? d5 5.Nb5! same idea as the mainline Na6 (5...Bb4+ 6.c3 Ba5 7.e5!; 5...Bd6?? 6.e5+-) 6.e5! Nd7 and white has a very good position. options here include]

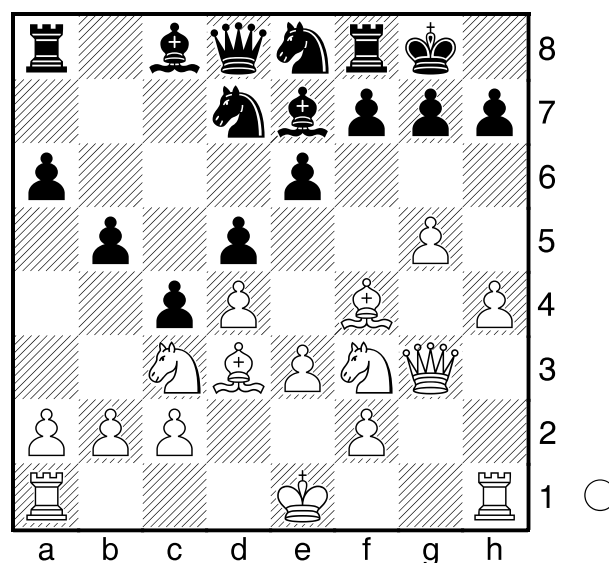
4...0-0 5.g4!? going for the attack!
5...d5 6.Bd3 a6 7.g5 Ne8 here I had a few moves to choose from. I could go Qh5 or Qg4 as well here. Or even Nf3.
8.h4 nothing wrong with this but honestly I should've given this move more thought

[8.Qh5!? seemed interesting, but I was worried about f5? I was worried about this but I probably shouldn't have been. (8...g6 once I provoke this I'm happy. 9.Qh6 and I really like my chances here)

A) 9.g6! it doesn't seem like I've accomplished much but actually it's pretty strong. hxg6 (9...h6? 10.Bxh6 gxh6 11.Qxh6+- is basically winning) 10.Qxg6+- queen is annoying and h4-h5-h6 comes;

B) 9.gxf6 Nxf6 and black is active.]

8...Nd7 9.Qf3 My plan was Qg3-Nf3-h5-g6 **9...c5 10.Qg3 b5 11.Nf3 c4**



So here Bxh7 is begging to be played, and I spent all my time calculating it but still decided to not play it **12.Bf1??**

[12.Bxh7+! Kxh7

A) 13.g6+? this wouldn't work fxg6 14.Ng5+ (14.h5!? I also looked at this g5 15.Nxg5+ Bxg5 16.Bxg5 Qc7 17.Bf4 Rxf4 18.Qg6+ Kg8 19.exf4 looks unclear...) 14...Bxg5! 15.hxg5+ Kg8+- and black is winning;



B) 13.h5! This is the correct follow-up that makes Bxh7 work, since g6 and h6 is coming 13...Kg8 14.g6! f5 15.h6!+- and black is lost]

12...Qa5 Now even though the position on the board was equal, black has the upper hand psychologically, not to mention the immense time pressure I

was under from spending all my time on the previous move **13.Bh3 b4** now it's definitely black for choice, I'm still in the game but time trouble was a huge issue **14.Ne2 b3+ 15.Nc3**

[15.c3 I debated this too but not enough time to decide which was better bxa2 16.Nc1 Qb6 17.Rxa2 Nd6 I thought my pieces were pretty awkward here]

15...Bb4 16.0-0 bxc2 17.g6?? desperation **17...hxg6 18.Ng5 Ndf6 19.Ne2 Nh5 20.Qf3 Qb6 21.Rac1 f6 22.Rxc2 fxg5 23.hxg5 Bd6 24.Qg2 Bxf4 25.exf4 Nxf4 26.Nxf4 Rxf4 27.Rxc4 Rb8 28.Rc3 Qxd4?? 29.Rxc8!** I recovered the piece somehow, but the position is still tough and I was too low on time **29...Rxc8 30.Bxe6+ Kf8 31.Bxc8 Nd6 32.Bd7??** [32.Bh3? had to be played] **32...Nf5+- 33.Bxf5 gxf5 34.Qh3 Rg4+** Rh4 is coming next, so I resigned.
0-1

3	D01
 Handigol,Abhishek	2096
 Zhou,Ruoyu	2052
Calchess State Championship	2022

1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bf4 e6 4.Nb5 Na6 5.e3 Be7 6.Bd3?! I messed up the move order here.

[6.Nf3 is the main move 0-0 (6...Nh5 7.Be5 f6 8.g4!) 7.Be2 c6 8.Nc3 Qb6 9.Rb1 c5 10.0-0 Bd7 11.Ne5 Rfd8 12.g4! with a strong attack]

6...0-0 7.g4 c6 8.Nc3 Nc7?

too passive

[8...Nb4 this should be played 9.Be2 c5 challenges the center]

9.g5 Nfe8 10.h4 f5 11.gxf6

I could've not taken en passant and got a good position, but I thought it would be easier to play with the open g-file. I

do have to be careful though, since I also opened the f-file for black's rook.

11...Nxf6 12.Nf3 Nce8?! too slow

[12...Bb4 black should at least try something active here. ..]

13.Ne5 c5 14.Qf3?

hugely underestimates black's counterplay.

[14.dxc5 If I just take on c5, black still does not have play. Bxc5 15.h5 d4 16.h6! g6 (16...dxc3?? 17.Bxh7+ Nxh7 18.Qxd8+-) 17.Bxg6! hxg6 18.Qd3!+-]

14...c4 15.Be2 Bb4 now black gets a lot of play on the queenside which I definitely did not have to allow. **16.h5 Bxc3+ 17.bxc3 Qa5** the queenside

pawns are going to fall no matter what, so I decide to go all-in for the attack

18.0-0!? Qxc3 19.Kh2! not wasting

time. preparing g1 for the rook

19...Qxc2 20.Rg1 Qe4 21.Qg3

[21.Qh3 this might be better, supporting h6.]

21...Qf5 22.Qh4 now surprisingly black is lost, since it's too difficult to

activate his pieces. Rg5-Rg1-h6 is

coming with a sac on g6 **22...Qc2**

23.Rg2 this is sneaky, but the immediate h6! was better.

[23.h6 Qxe2 24.hxg7 Nxg7 (24...Qh5 25.Qxh5 Nxh5 26.gxf8Q+ Kxf8 27.Bh6+ Ke7 28.Rg8+-

white is up the exchange and has more active pieces, black does not have enough compensation)

25.Rxg7+! Kxg7 26.Qh6+ Kg8

27.Rg1+ Ng4+ 28.Nxg4+-]

23...c3

[23...Qxe2? 24.f3+- nice little queen trap]

24.Bd3 Qb2 25.h6! rook sac! **25...g6**

[25...Qxa1 26.hxg7 Nxg7 27.Rxg7+! Kxg7 28.Bh6+ Kh8 29.Bxf8+-]

26.Bxg6! hxg6 27.h7+ Nxh7

28.Rxg6+ Kh8 29.Rag1 Nef6

12.exd5 Nb8 now my knight has to go here, which is less than ideal **13.c3**

Nbd7 14.Bb3 Kh7 a prophylactic move, preparing against **Qc1 15.Ra2 Rae8 16.c4 e4?** too hasty. this helps white to open up the e-file, where my queen on e7 doesn't help me

[16...Qd8 needs some more preparatory moves 17.Bc3 Ng8 18.Rae2 f5 with about equal chances. white has the two bishops but the light squared bishop doesn't have an active diagonal]

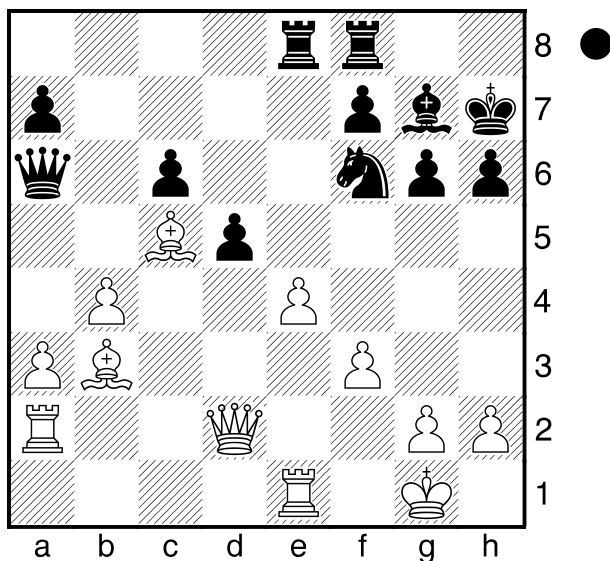
17.Bc2 Ne5!? this was my idea, trying to make it complicated by saccing a pawn, but black is definitely worse

18.Nxe5 Qxe5 19.f3 Qd4+ 20.Be3 Qc3 21.Bd2 Qd4+ 22.Be3 Qc3

I'm definitely fine with a draw! **23.dxe4**

Qxc4 24.Bb3 Qa6 luckily I have this square for my queen, but it's not looking good! white has the open c-file and my c7 pawn is a target **25.Qc2 c6**

I try to free my position a bit and give some room to my pieces, also getting rid of the c7 target **26.dxc6 bxc6 27.Qd2 d5** again, fighting against the pawn chain and getting rid of the d6 target **28.Bc5**



dxe4!? I thought this was interesting, and instead of overthinking like I usually do, I decided to go for it! Also since it was rapid and my opponent was low on

time, it was a good practical try

[28...Rh8± this didn't seem fun to play, but probably is objectively best]

29.Bxf8 Rxf8 30.Bd1? a mysterious retreating move

[30.fxe4 white should just take the pawn and ask me to prove compensation Ng4 this was my idea, but I don't think it's enough for the exchange 31.h3 Qb6+ 32.Kh1 Rd8 33.Qe2 Ne5± I have some activity and my position is solid (besides the weakness on c6), so I hoped I could generate something, but ultimately white is much better.]

30...Re8 makes sense, but not as forcing. I missed an important chance

[30...Nd5! threatening a nasty Bc3 31.Rxe4? (31.fxe4 probably best is to give back the exchange since black's dark squared bishop is powerful Bc3 32.Qe2 Qb6+ 33.Kh1 Nf4 34.Qe3 Bxe1 35.Qxf4= just an engine line of what could happen, I would definitely take black here!) 31...Nc3 wins back the exchange with interest]

31.g3 e3?! I thought this was a nice move, idea is Rxe3 Qb6, but it closes down the position and the a7-g1 diagonal

[31...Nd5! again, this is the best move]

32.Qe2

[32.Qc1 now white can try to blockade on the light squares Nd5 33.Be2 Qb6]

32...Qb6 33.Kg2 Nd5 34.Bb3 Nc3 35.Qc4 Nxa2 36.Bxa2 Re7±

I got back the exchange and have a strong passed pawn on e3, but I still have to deal with f7 and c6, and the blockade on e2, so winning this wasn't easy, but I managed to do it (in an intense time scramble :))

0-1

6

□ Hamedani, Farshad Farrokh

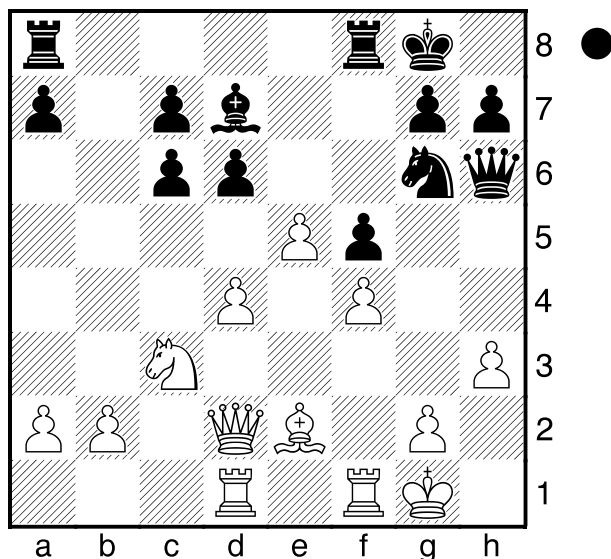
■ Handigol, Abhishek

Pacific Coast Open

1900

2114

2023



Here black is suffering since my pieces have no active prospects and white has all the control in the position. the only way to get back in the game is to complicate the position **20...Kh8** getting out of the a2-g8 diagonal **21.Kh2 Rad8?**

[21...Qh4 I should've taken this chance to reroute my queen **22.g3 Qe7**]

22.g3 oops. now my queen is stuck.

22...Rfe8 23.Bf3 Nf8 trying to untangle my pieces, maybe Ne6 and c5? **24.b4 Ne6?**

[24...dxe5! important to take here first, I was hesitant because it leaves me with two pawn islands but it's worth doing to open up the rooks **25.dxe5 Ne6** black is worse but it's not over yet]

25.Qg2?

[25.exd6! cxd6 **26.d5!+-** transforms the pawn structure so I have a weakness on d6]

25...g5! Suddenly I'm back in the game

26.Bxc6 gxf4! 27.Bxd7 Rg8!?

sneaky in-between move, now white is

under a lot of pressure **28.g4??**

an oversight after which white is immediately losing. white has to sac the queen

[28.Bxe6 Rxc3 29.Bd5 Rxc2+

30.Bxc2 dxe5 white has several pieces for the queen, a pretty tricky position]

28...Rxc4+ 29.Bxe6 Rxc2+ 30.Kxc2

Qxe6 31.Kf3 dxe5 32.Ne2 Qxa2

33.Rc1 e4+

0-1

7

C55

□ Qin, Vincent

2029

■ Handigol, Abhishek

2133

17th Smith Memorial Tournament

2023

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 h6 5.c3 d6 6.0-0 g5 I had played this system before against him, so I was a bit worried that he might have prepared something. **7.Nbd2 Bg7 8.Bb3 a5 9.a4 Qe7 10.Nc4 Be6** Luckily, we were following a line from my prep that I reviewed right before the game, so I did not have to think here :) **11.Ne3 Qd7 12.Re1 d5 13.exd5 Nxd5 14.Nc4 f6 15.d4 g4 16.Nh4 0-0-0 17.dxe5 fxe5 18.Ng6 Rhe8 19.Ngxe5 Nxe5 20.Nxe5 Bxe5 21.Rxe5** Here I was not sure how the line went, so I tried to play reasonable-looking moves **21...Qg7** luckily, I played the correct move from my analysis, getting the queen out of the d-file to threaten discoveries on the white queen

[21...Nxc3 this is not as good since white ends up up a pawn **22.Qxd7+ Kxd7 23.Bc2 Bb3! 24.Rxe8 Rxe8 25.Bf5+ Be6 26.Bxe6+ Rxe6 27.Bd2 Nd5 28.Bxa5±**]

22.Qe1 this deviates from my prep, but it

[22.Qd4 Nxc3! 23.Qxc3 Qxe5!!
24.Qxe5 Bxb3 25.Qf5+ Be6!
(25...Kb8?? 26.Be3+-) 26.Qc2 Bb3
27.Qf5+= this is the forced draw that
was in my prep, shows just how
crazy preparation is nowadays...]

[24.Qd2 Nxc3! 25.Bxf7 Ne2+!
in between move 26.Kf1 (26.Kh1
Qxf7-+) 26...Qxf7-+]

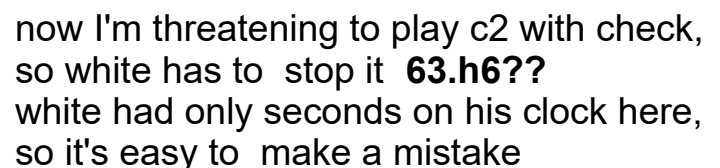
here this looks pretty equal, but I thought I could put some pressure **26...Re4**

27.Qf2 Qe8 28.Qf5+ Kb8 29.Qxa5
Rxe3 30.Rf1 Re1 here we were both in
time pressure. I was fine with a draw, but
I really wanted to win this game so I
was trying to play quickly 31.Qf5 Rxf1+
32.Kxf1 Qxa4 33.Ke2 b6 34.Qf8+
Kb7 35.Qxh6 Qb5+ 36.Ke1 Qxb2
37.Qd2 Qb1+ 38.Kf2 Qf5+ 39.Kg3
here I got an idea - I can try to create a
passed pawn on the queenside, which
could potentially be dangerous later
39...b5 40.Qd4 c6 now if white takes on
g4, I can take on c3 without worrying
about Qf3+ 41.c4 this is fine objectively,
but this helps me create my own passed
pawn! 41...bxc4

42.Qxc4 now I realized I'm losing the g4 pawn no matter what, but white's pawns on the kingside aren't that threatening, and white's king has nowhere to hide

now my queen is centralized, his king and queen are in an awkward position, my c pawn is moving fast, and his pawns are still on h2 and g2 so I thought I had good practical chances to win here

56...Kd5 57.Qb5+ Kd4 58.Qd7+ Kc4
59.Qc7+ Kb3 60.Qb6+ Ka2 61.Qa6+
Kb2 62.h5 Qb3



[63.Qf6! white has to stop the pawn,
and there is no way to shield the
black king from future checks Kb1
64.Qf1+ Ka2 65.Qa6+= black can't

escape the checks]

63...c2+-+ 64.Kh2 c1Q 65.Qf6+ Qcc3 66.Qf2+ Ka3 67.Qf8+ Ka2 68.h7 Qg3+ 69.Kg1 Qd1+ 70.Qf1 Qe3+ 71.Kh2 Qh5# a thrilling game, and an important one on the way to NM, showing that sometimes pressing in a drawn position can be worth it
0-1

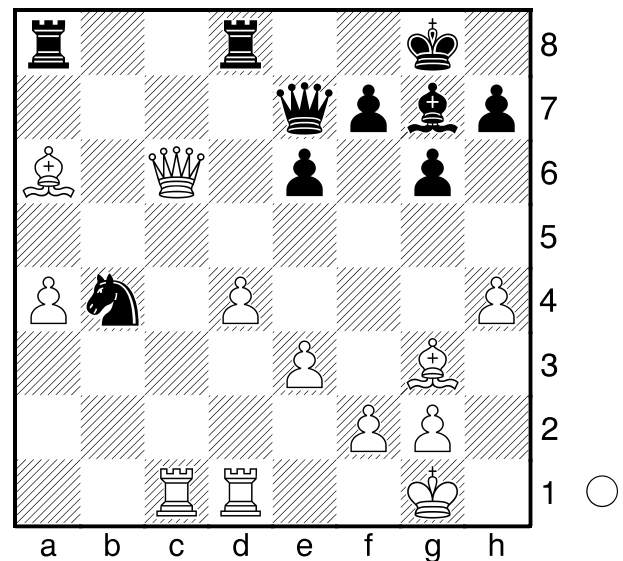
8 **A45**
□ **Handigol,Abhishek** **2133**
■ **Wang,Jeffery** **2191**
17th Smith Memorial Tournament **2023**

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 g6 3.e3 Bg7 4.Nf3 0-0 5.h3 pretty quiet system, but it's a pretty straightforward setup **5...d6 6.Be2 c5 7.0-0 Qb6** now I thought of playing Qc1, but I thought why not set a trap with Nbd2? I had looked at this position before and saw that Qxb2 enters a losing position **8.Nbd2** I played this fast and acted like I forgot about the pawn. please take the pawn, please take the pawn... **8...Qxb2 YES! 9.Nc4 Qb4 10.c3!** this is the key idea. Black saves the queen (barely), but I get a better position out of it **10...Qb5** forced
[10...Qxc3?? 11.Rc1! Qb4 12.Rb1! Qc3 13.Rb3+-]
11.Nxd6 Qd7 12.Bb5?! probably not necessary, since my bishop goes back to e2 later after being chased with a6
12...Qd8 13.Nxc8 Qxc8 14.Rc1 protecting c3 **14...a6 15.Be2 Nc6 16.Qc2** opening the way for the other rook **16...Rd8 17.a4** preventing b5 ideas **17...e6 18.Rfd1 cxd4 19.cxd4 Qd7? 20.Ne5!** wins another pawn
20...Qe7

[20...Nxe5 apparently black can do this, which I didn't think was possible in the game 21.dxe5 Nd5 22.e4 Rac8 23.Qb2 Nxf4 24.Rxd7 Nxe2+

25.Kh2 Nxc1 26.Rxd8+ Rxd8 27.Qxc1 Bxe5+ and black has good compensation for the queen, though I would still take white]

21.Nxc6 bxc6 22.Qxc6 now I'm up a pawn, but was definitely not underestimating my opponent **22...Nd5 23.Bg3 Qg5** threatening Nxe3 **24.h4 Qe7 25.Bxa6!** now I can "fall" for the trap, but I planned a resource here
25...Nb4



26.Qb7! a nice move. now black either has to be down two pawns or trade queens **26...Qxb7 27.Bxb7 Ra7 28.Bf3 Rxa4 29.Rc4** this was the point. now black is stuck! **29...Bf8** tries to free the rook **30.Rb1** nope! now if the rook moves, I'll get two bishops for the rook **30...Be7 31.Kh2** just in case there are any Ra8-Ra1 ideas trying to unpin
[31.Bd1]
31...Kg7 32.Bd1 finally getting more material **32...Ra5 33.Bc7** actually, I'll go for the rooks instead! **33...Rc8** looks like black solved Bxa5 and Rxb4, but there's another trick I was planning!
34.Be5+ Rxe5 35.Rxc8 now black is down an exchange and a pawn, which is hopeless. an important game which put me on 4/4 for the tournament (and

some key bonus points along with it)
1-0

9 **A45**
□ **Handigol,Abhishek** **2166**
■ **Kagle,Sasha** **1991**
WIM Ruth Haring Memorial TNM 2023

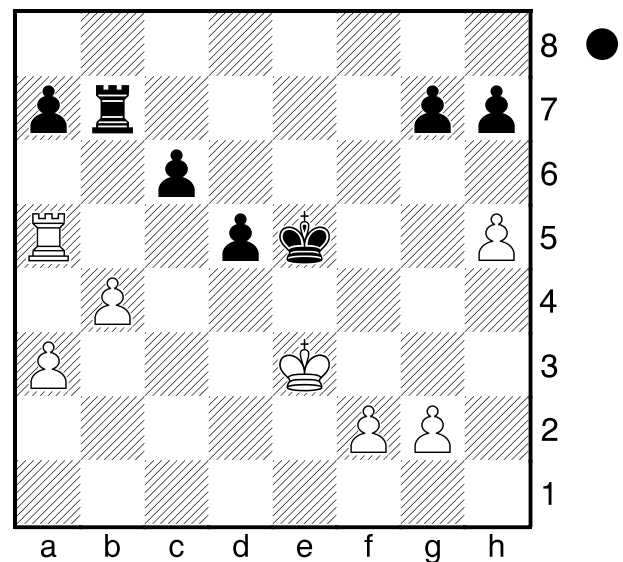
1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 d5 3.e3 e6 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.Ne5 0-0 6.Nd2 c5 7.c3 Nc6 8.Bd3 Qc7 9.Ndf3 Ne4 10.h4? For some reason I mixed up my variations, and now I'm worse.

[10.0-0 is the correct move]
10...f6 **11.Nxc6 Bxf4 12.exf4 bxc6** now the h4 pawn makes no sense
13.Qc1 cxd4 14.cxd4 Qa5+ 15.Nd2 Luckily I'm still fine here, since I'm threatening to take e4 and castle
15...Nxd2 16.Qxd2 Qb6

[16...Qxd2+ 17.Kxd2 e5!= now black has no problems]
17.0-0 here I have some chances because of black's weak pawns **17...Ba6 18.Bxa6 Qxa6 19.Rfe1 Rfe8 20.Qc3** putting pressure on both the pawns
20...Qb6 21.Rac1 Rac8 22.b4 trying to fix the pawn on c6 **22...Kf7 23.Qc5?** actually, this is a mistake since my queen is more active than black's. I could potentially use it on the kingside later **23...Qxc5 24.Rxc5** black definitely has chances to hold, but I can try to put pressure on a7 and c6 and e6. Black's king can't hold everything **24...Ke7 25.Rec1 Kd7** sadly, the king is too close for me to play b5, otherwise that would just win on the spot. **26.R1c3 Rc7 27.h5** not sure if this was necessary, but maybe g7 can be weak later. of course, this is double edged since h5 can also be a weakness. **27...Rb8 28.a3 Rb5 29.Kf1**

[29.Rxb5? I definitely don't want to do this since I want to keep the pawn on

c6 cxb5=]
29...Rxc5 30.Rxc5 Kd6 now c6 and a7 are pretty well defended, and e5 is coming, so I had to think of how else I can put pressure. **31.Ke2 Rb7 32.Ra5** not allowing Rb5 to try to trade the rooks, and also tying the rook to a7 **32...e5** tries to break, but now I can use the d4 square for my king **33.fxe5+** maybe opens up the position too soon [33.Ke3 this at least makes black's job for equalizing harder]
33...fxe5 34.dxe5+ Kxe5 35.Ke3



Kd6? no need to go back!

[35...Rf7 this is a lot better, trying to get some activity with the rook and slightly more active king **36.Ra6 d4+ 37.Ke2 Kd5=** black is holding everything and has an active rook]
36.Ra6 now it's getting difficult for black if not already lost **36...Re7+ 37.Kd4 Re4+ 38.Kd3 Rh4 39.b5!** important move, if I liquidate the pawns with Rxa7 it's less convincing
[39.Rxa7 Rxh5 40.Rxg7 c5 41.bxc5+ Kxc5 this is winning but a lot less clear]
39...Rxh5 40.Rxc6+ Ke5 41.Rc7 Rg5 42.g3! not allowing the rook to get active **42...Rg4 43.Rxa7** now I have

two connected passers, which will definitely be stronger than the d pawn.

43...Kd6 44.a4 Kc5 45.Kc3

trying to help the pawns with the king, but still keeping an eye on the d-pawn

45...h5 46.Rc7+ Kb6 47.Rc6+ Kb7

48.Kb3 now my rook is in a better

position and I can just go Rd6 to stop the d pawn, and advance my own pawns

48...g5 49.a5 h4 50.a6+ Kb8 51.b6

Rc4 a nice trick, but I won't take your rook! **52.a7+**

[52.Rh6 this was a lot more straightforward, since the two passers creates a mating net Rc8 53.Kb4 h3 54.a7+ Ka8 55.Kb5 now Ka6 and b7 is unstoppable, and black has too many pawns to hope for a stalemate]

52...Ka8 53.Rh6 Rc8 54.gxh4 gxh4

55.Rxh4 just for good measure, taking the pawn

55...Kb7 56.Rh6 d4

I still have to be a bit careful but luckily I have an extra f pawn which decides the game **57.Kb4 Ka6 58.Rc6! Rd8**

59.Rd6! Rc8 60.f4 d3 61.Rxd3 Kxb6

62.Ra3 Ra8 63.Kc4 now my king can get in, and it's over **63...Kc6 64.Ra6+**

Kd7 65.Kd5 other than a couple mistakes, I was happy overall with how I converted the rook ending

1-0

10

□ **Shrauger,Alex Hayden**

■ **Handigol,Abhishek**

WIM Ruth Haring Memorial TNM

E04

2062

2166

2023

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2

dxcc4 5.Nf3 a6 I like playing the open catalan as black, since white has to

prove compensation for the pawn

(although I do admit it can get

dangerous for black). for some reason

sub-2200, people aren't prepared for this

6.0-0 Nc6 7.e3 Rb8 8.Qe2 b5

9.b3 cxb3 10.axb3 Bb7 11.Rd1 Nb4

12.Bb2 Be7 13.Nbd2

[13.Nc3 I could tell my opponent was confused from my opening choice. It felt like the knight belonged on c3 rather than d2]

13...0-0 14.e4 Nd7

[14...c5! black can get away with this, which is an important move to challenge white's center, although it leads to complications 15.e5

(15.Rac1 Rc8) 15...Nd7 16.Ne4

Bd5 17.dxc5 Nxc5 18.Nfg5 Ncd3!

19.Rxd3 Nxd3 20.Nxh7! Kxh7

21.Qxd3 g6 black has an edge, but obviously it doesn't look simple.]

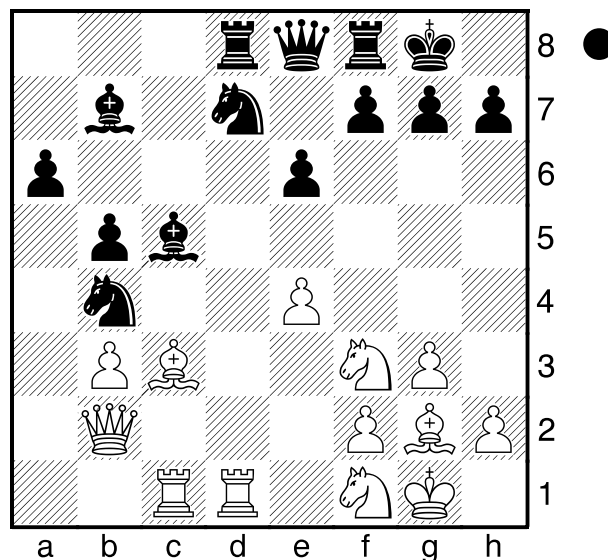
15.Nf1 the f1 knight doesn't have many prospects **15...Qe8 16.Bc3 Rd8**

17.Rac1 c5 finally I get this break c5.

white definitely doesn't have

compensation anymore **18.dxc5 Bxc5**

19.Qb2



Bxe4? here's where I slipped, allowing my opponent back in the game unnecessarily.

[19...f6! simple and effective 20.Nd4 Ne5! aiming for the d3 square]

20.Bxg7 Nd3 this doesn't really work

since white can sac the rook **21.Rxd3**

Bxd3 22.Bh6 e5 23.Bxf8? cashes in

too early

[23.Bh3! attacking e5 indirectly Qe7
24.Bxf8 Nxf8 25.Qxe5 Ba3 26.Qxe7
Bxe7= with equal chances apparently,
although I would take black here
because of the two bishops and the
queenside majority]

23...Bxf8 24.Ra1 e4 now my dark
squared bishop is unopposed **25.Re1**
Bg7 misses an opportunity

[25...Bb4! 26.Re3 Qe7 27.N3d2 Nf6
the d3 bishop and e4 pawn are
stopping white's pieces]

26.Qd2?? blunders a piece, but it was
already a difficult position

[26.Qc1]

26...Bxf1!

[26...Ne5 this move order also works
27.Nxe5 Bxf1 28.Qa5 Bxg2 29.Nxf7
(29.Nc6 Rc8) 29...Kxf7 30.Kxg2-+]

27.Kxf1 Ne5 28.Nd4 Qd7

here my opponent resigned, in view of

29.Rxe4 Ng6! key square

[29...Nc6?? 30.Nf3! the c6 knight
hangs in the end Qxd2 31.Nxd2
Rxd2 32.Re8+ Bf8 33.Bxc6+]

30.h4 Bxd4 31.h5 Ne7 32.Qg5+ Kf8

33.Qh6+ Bg7 34.Qxa6 Qf5 and black
is up a piece.

0-1

11

□ **Handigol, Abhishek**

■ **Dasika, Archit**

WIM Ruth Haring Memorial TNM

A06

2166

2224

2023

The final challenge of the tournament. I
obviously wanted to win for my NM
chances, and my opponent is solid so I
thought I would go for something sharp!
I didn't have enough time to prepare
something with 1. e4, so I tried to find a
sharp line that didn't have too much
theory (and would hopefully catch him
by surprise) **1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.c4**

I decided to play something new with this
e3 c4 system. **3...c6 4.Nc3 Nbd7**
5.b3? and already I mix up the move
order.

[5.Qc2 this is important since there is
e5 6.cxd5 Nxd5 now black has to
take with the knight (6...cxd5??
7.Nb5+-)]

5...e5 safe to say the opening was a
failure! black has the center **6.cxd5**
cxd5 7.Qc2 comes a move too late
7...a6 8.Bb2 Bd6 9.Be2 0-0

the opening did not go how I planned, so
how do I react? create chaos, of course!

10.g4!? probably a bad move objectively,
but I know g4 is an idea in this system,
so I figured it can't be that bad! **10...e4+**

11.Nd4 Nb6? black chickens out a bit

[11...Ne5 this is simple and
straightforward, I can get the d5 pawn
but black definitely has compensation
12.g5 Nfd7 13.Nxd5 Nc5!+
and black will take the juicy d3 square.
I doubt I would be able to win from
such a position]

12.Rg1 I definitely want black to take on
h2 since that opens the h file for me

12...Be6 13.g5 Nfd7 14.d3 It looks a
little suspicious because of the c-file, but
it works tactically and I really wanted to
open my queen / e2 bishop **14...Rc8**

15.dxe4 Bb4 this looks scary with the
double pin of the knight on c3, but

concretely black can't win the knight
16.a3 Bxc3+ black has to take to justify
the previous move **17.Bxc3 Qc7**

18.Rc1 Qxh2 objectively the best move.
obviously I was happy to see this since
I can use the h-file later **19.Kd2!?**
I thought this was smart connecting the
rooks, and this leads to a chaotic
position

[19.Nf3 Qd6 I didn't see what to do
here, but there are several good
options like 20.Rh1! threatening e5
and ed g6 21.b4 with a pretty double-

edged position]

19...Qd6 gives the advantage, but I probably would've played the same thing.

[19...Nc5! heading for the e4 square which is quite weak, although it gets extremely complicated (more than a human can understand), I will show the line for fun: 20.Rh1 Qxf2 (20...Nxe4+?? 21.Qxe4+-) 21.exd5 g6 22.Rxh7! Bxd5 (22...Kxh7 23.Rh1+ Kg8 24.Nc6!+- threats of Ne7 and Rh8) 23.Nf3! threatening Rh8# Nxb3+ 24.Qxb3! Rxc3! 25.Qxb6 Bxf3 26.Rxf7! desperado Rd3+! 27.Kxd3 Bxe2+ 28.Kd2!

stepping into the discovery since the queen is attacked Qxf7 29.Kxe2 with a slight edge for black because of white's weak king]

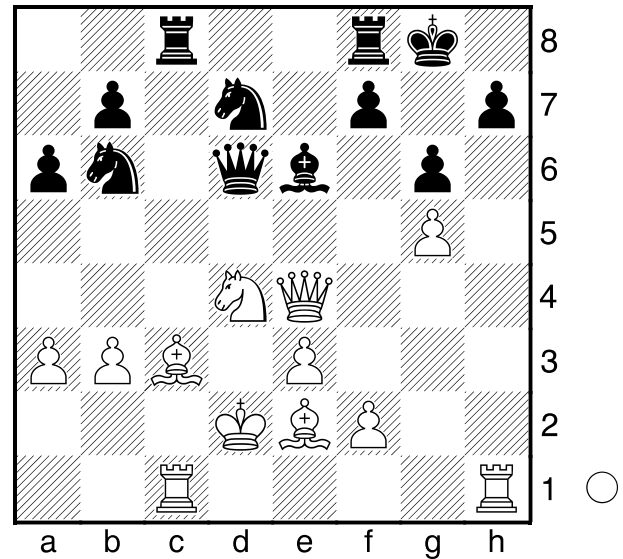
[19...Qxf2 20.Rcf1! Qh4 21.Rh1! Qxg5 22.Rfg1! now black is in trouble because of Nxe6 ideas opening the bishop Rxc3! this has to be played 23.Qxc3 Qf6 24.Nxe6 Qxc3+ 25.Kxc3 fxe6 I obviously didn't calculate this engine line, but intuitively I thought Qxf2 would help me open more files]

20.Rh1 dxe4?? probably black didn't see the refutation coming, or was worried about exd5 or e5, but the move order was key here

[20...g6 21.e5! Qxa3 22.Rh6= white's attack looks dangerous, with both the rooks about to be doubled, but the position is pretty unclear]

21.Qxe4+- g6

(Diagram)



22.Rxh7!! overlooked by my opponent, this is the reason this dxe4 move order doesn't work **22...Rxc3** nice try, but

[22...Kxh7 23.Qh4+! Kg7 24.Qh6+! Kg8 25.Rh1+-]

23.Rch1! just ignore the rook! **23...Rc2+ 24.Qxc2 f5 25.gxf6** black resigns since there is no way to stop all the mates. A satisfying final victory against a strong player that pushed me over 2200 (barely)! **25...Bf5**

[25...Nxf6 26.Qxg6#]

[25...Rxf6 this is the most satisfying one 26.Rh8+ Kf7 27.R1h7#]

26.Rg7#

1-0

The Chess Scuttlebutt

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

Chess and [hamburgers](#) in Canada.

A deep-dive into *Star Trek's* [Tri-Dimensional](#) chess.

Improve your chess - by giving it a [rest](#).

The effects of psychedelics on chess players is explored [here](#).

The FIDE Ethics & Disciplinary Commission [finds](#) that Hans Niemann did not cheat in his game with Magnus Carlsen, and Carlsen is fined 10,000 euros for withdrawing from the 2022 Sinquefeld Cup "without valid reason."

An eight year old girl from England is the chess world's latest [sensation](#).

And they keep on coming: yet another eight year old [defeats](#) five Grandmasters at the 2023 World Rapid and Blitz Championships in Samarkand.

Accusations of cheating are [firing](#) up the chess world, with chess.com, Vladimir Kramnik, and Hikaru Nakamura involved in the latest imbroglio.

IM Carissa Yip [wins](#) the 2023 North American Junior U20 Championship for her 1st GM norm.

WIM [Rita Atkins](#) on education, gender stereotyping, and much, much more.

Chinese Chess (Xiangqi) is rocked by a curiously familiar cheating scandal - with a [disgusting](#) twist.

World Champion for 27 years, Dr. Emanuel Lasker was [born](#) on Christmas Eve.

A shout out to the [Perpetual Chess Podcast](#), and listen [here](#) as International Masters John Donaldson and Cyrus Lakdawala remember IM Jeremy Silman.

Was the first [murder](#) in the Antarctic over a disputed chess game?

Urine samples, private lounges, inappropriate shoes: The 2023 FIDE World Rapid and Blitz made [headlines](#) for all the wrong reasons.

Magnus Carlsen won [both](#) the 2023 World Rapid and Blitz, and now has a total of 17 World Championship titles. In a statement victory for Russian women, IM Anastasia Bodnaruk and GM Valentina Gunina won the [Women's Rapid](#), and [Women's Blitz](#) respectively.

Does playing chess make you an [idol worshiper](#)?

The United States Chess Federation has [revised](#) its Safe Play Policy.

The River Thames is dumping [sewage](#) into the Chess River.

A shout-out to the [C-Squared Podcast](#), hosted by Grandmasters Christian Chirila and Fabiano Caruana, and watch [here](#) to see how six Indian players were robbed in Spain.

We also follow [Chess: The Game of Kings](#), on Reddit. [Here](#) is GM Jan-Krzysztof Duda refusing to shake hands with Putin supporter Russian GM Denis Khismatullin at the 2023 World Rapid and Blitz, an action that could have led to his [disqualification](#).

A [deep-dive](#) into FIDE's controversial ban on trans women competing in women's events.

"Deep in the concrete jungle of LA, epic [trash-talkers](#) play chess day and night."

[OnTheQueenside](#) has a terrific [article](#) about the rise of women's chess in Asia on Substack, which hosts many other writers on chess, including WGM [Jennifer Shahade](#) and FM [Dennis Monokroussos](#).

Chess players meet around the country in [libraries](#) and [cafes](#), in [restaurants](#) and [art galleries](#).
They even play on [basketball courts](#).

WGM Dorsa Derakhshani's fascinating [story](#), from Iranian exile to medical school in the United States.

It's [official](#): Carlsen gives up his place in the 2024 Candidates Tournament, and will be replaced by GM Nijat Abasov from Azerbaijan.

We appreciate Wikipedia's coverage of all things chess, including comprehensive entries on the [2024 Candidates Tournament](#) and the [2024 Womens Candidates Tournament](#).

A Norwegian philosopher thinks it's time to [slow down](#) our chess games.

A terrific [interview](#) with "content creator" and popular streamer, WFM Anna Cramling.

"Forgotten" World Champion Ding Liren [returns](#) to top level play in the Netherlands, after a less than sterling [result](#) at home in the 1st China Chess King tournament.

An in-depth [update](#) to the brouhaha surrounding chess on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley.

GM Ding is king: a [list](#) of the top prize-winners over the year.

No respect: Women's World Champion GM Ju Wenjun is [disseed](#) by Carlsen fans.

The United States Chess Federation is [seeking](#) a new Executive Director.

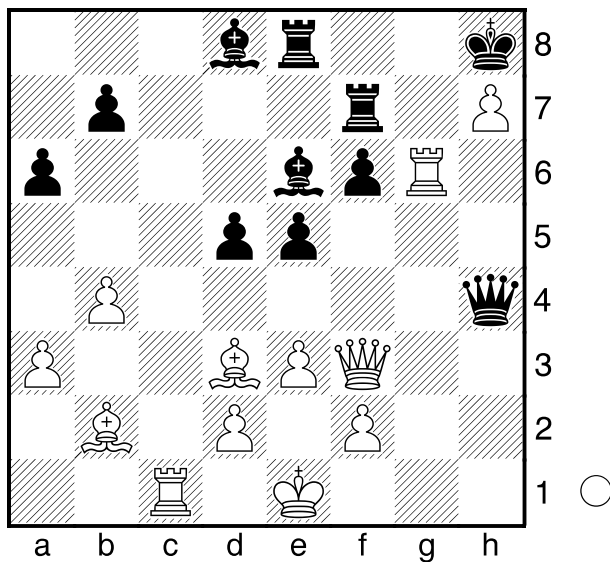
Finally, you will soon be able to play chess on your smart-phone using your [tongue](#).

Recent Games

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

Bartel,Mateusz A17 2651
 Moussard,Jules 2639
 13th London Chess Classic 2023 (2.4)

A pretty combination exploits the long diagonal and problems along black's back-rank. 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qb3 c5 5.a3 Ba5 6.g4 h6 7.Rg1 Nc6 8.h4 Nd4 9.Nxd4 cxd4 10.Nb5 d5 11.c5 Ne4 12.Nxd4 Nxc5 13.Qb5+ Nd7 14.b4 Bb6 15.Bb2 a6 16.Qa4 0-0 17.g5 Ne5 18.gxh6 g6 19.Qb3 Qxh4 20.h7+ Kh8 21.Qe3 f6 22.Nf3 Nxf3+ 23.Qxf3 e5 24.Rxg6 Be6 25.Rc1 Rf7 26.e3 Re8 27.Bd3 Bd8

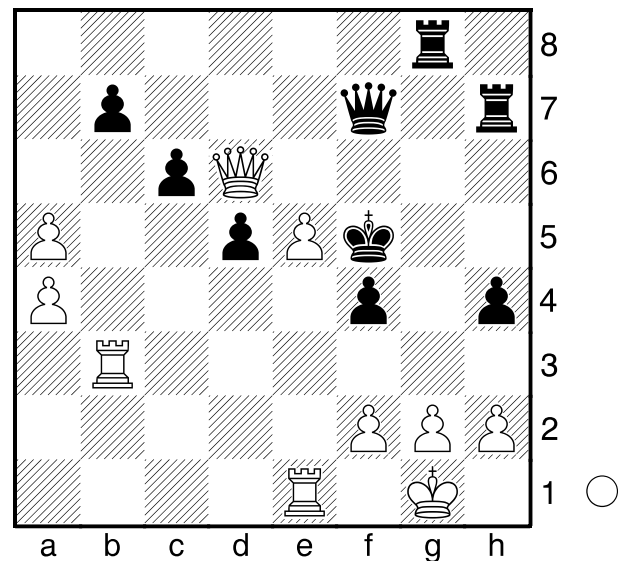


28.Bxe5! Rxh7
 [28...fxe5 29.Rxe6!+-]
29.Rxf6 Qh1+ 30.Ke2
1-0

Adams,Michael B12 2670
 Bartel,Mateusz 2651
 13th London Chess Classic 2023 (3.3)

A terrific example of line-opening pawn jabs and pseudo-sacrifices. 1.e4 c6

2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nf3 e6 5.Be2 Nd7 6.0-0 a5 7.a4 f6 8.Be3 Qb6 9.Nbd2 fxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.dxe5 Bc5 12.Bxc5 Qxc5 13.Nb3 Qe7 14.Bh5+ g6 15.Be2 h5 16.Qd2 Qc7 17.Bd3 Nh6 18.Nd4 Qe7 19.Ra3 Bxd3 20.Rxd3 Nf5 21.Nxf5 gxf5 22.c4 Kf7 23.cxd5 exd5 24.Re1 Ke6 25.Rg3 Qf7 26.b4 h4 27.Rb3 f4 28.bxa5 Rag8 29.Qb4 Rh7 30.Qd6+ Kf5

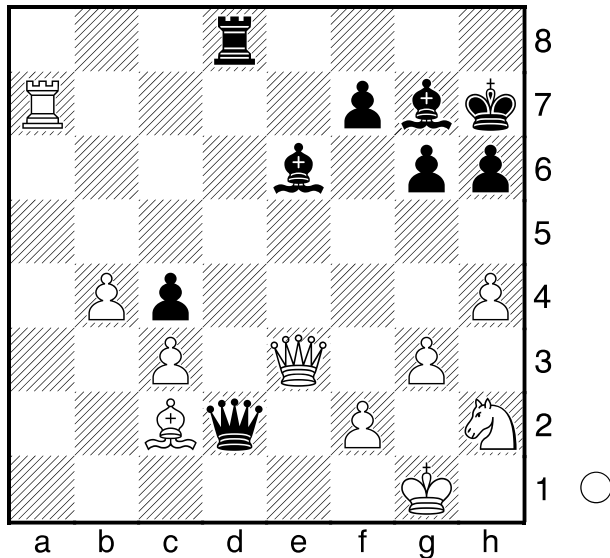


31.Rxb7! Qxb7 32.Qf6+ Kg4 33.Qe6+ Kh5 34.Qxg8 Rg7 35.Qf8 d4 36.e6 c5 37.Qxg7!
 [37.Qxg7 Qxg7 38.e7+-]
1-0

Vachier Lagrave,Maxime C90 2731
 Caruana,Fabiano 2794
 CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (1.2)

A pretty shot destroys black's defensive wall. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.d3 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.a4 Bd7 10.Nbd2 Na5 11.Bc2 c5 12.Re1 Re8 13.Nf1 h6 14.Bd2 Bf8 15.Ne3 c4 16.axb5 axb5 17.Qe2 cxd3 18.Qxd3 Qc7 19.b4 Nc4

20.Nxc4 bxc4 21.Qe2 Rxa1 22.Rxa1 d5 23.exd5 e4 24.Nd4 Nxd5 25.Ra5 e3 26.Rxd5 exd2 27.Qxd2 Bc8 28.h3 g6 29.Ba4 Re4 30.Nf3 Kh7 31.Bc2 Re8 32.h4 Be6 33.Ra5 Rd8 34.Qe3 Bg7 35.Ra7 Qb8 36.g3 Bd5 37.Re7 Qd6 38.Nh2 Be6 39.Ra7 Qd2



40.Bxg6+! Kxg6

[40...fxg6 41.Qxe6 Qxc3 42.Ng4 Rf8 43.h5 gxh5 44.Qxh6+ Kg8 45.Qxh5+-]

41.Qe4+ Kh5 42.g4+ Kxh4 43.Nf3+ 1-0

□ **Firouzja,Alireza**

■ **Abdusattorov,Nodirbek**

CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (1.2)

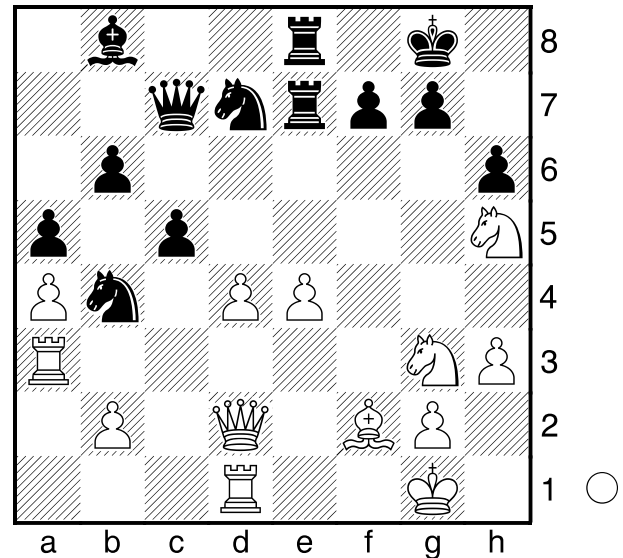
D35

2763

2727

A crushing blow on the 28th move, and it's all over. 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 Re8 8.Nge2 h6 9.Bh4 c6 10.0-0 a5 11.Rc1 Nbd7 12.a4 Nb8 13.f3 Na6 14.Bf2 Nb4 15.Bb1 b6 16.Ng3 Ra7 17.h3 Bd6 18.Qd2 Bb8 19.Rfd1 Be6 20.Nce2 Rae7 21.Rc3 Nd7 22.e4 c5 23.Nh5 dxe4 24.fxe4 Ba2 25.Bxa2 Nxa2 26.Ra3 Nb4

27.Neg3 Qc7



28.Nxg7! Kxg7 29.Nf5+ Kg8 30.Rg3+ Qxg3 31.Bxg3 Bxg3 32.Qxh6 1-0

C54

□ **Caruana,Fabiano**

2794

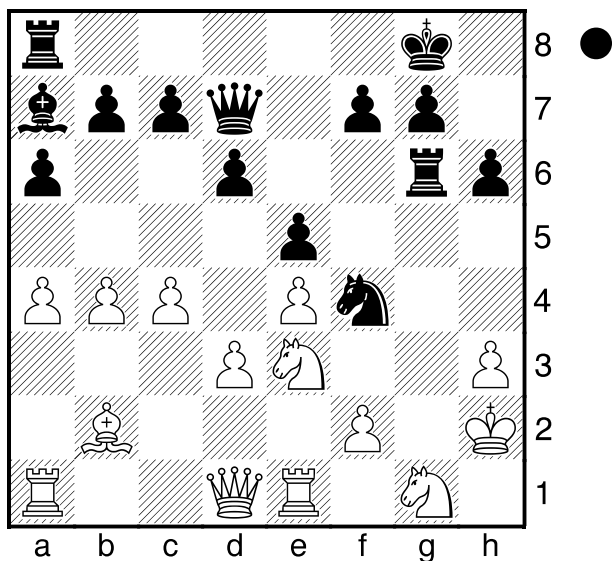
■ **Firouzja,Alireza**

2763

CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (2.1)

White gets bamboozled, and black wins with a sustained attack. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.0-0 d6 6.c3 0-0 7.h3 a6 8.a4 Ba7 9.Re1 h6 10.Nbd2 Re8 11.b4 Be6 12.Bxe6 Rxe6 13.Bb2 Nh5 14.Nf1 Ne7 15.c4 Ng6 16.g3 Ngf4!? 17.gxf4 Rg6+ 18.Kh2 Nxf4 19.Ne3 Qd7 20.Ng1? [20.Nf5!]

(Diagram)

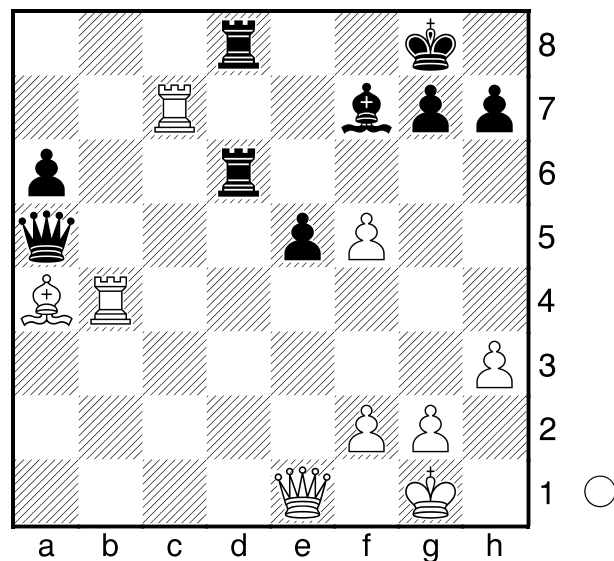


20...Rxcg1! 21.Kxcg1 Qxh3 22.c5 h5
23.Re2 Re8 24.Qf1 Nxe2+ 25.Qxe2
Re6 26.Ng2 Rg6 27.Qf1 h4 28.Rc1
a5 29.Bc3 Qg4 30.Kh2 h3 31.Ne3
Qf4+ 32.Kh1 Qf3+ 33.Kh2 Qf4+
34.Kh1 dxc5 35.bxc5 Qf3+ 36.Kh2
Bxc5 37.Qh1 Qxf2+
0-1

□ Carlsen,Magnus C84 2830
■ Abdusattorov,Nodirbek 2727
CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (2.3)

A petite-combination simplifies to a routine win. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.d3 d6 7.c3 0-0 8.Re1 b5 9.Bc2 d5 10.Nbd2 dxe4 11.dxe4 Be6 12.Qe2 Qc8 13.h3 Nd7 14.Nf1 Bc4 15.Qd1 Rd8 16.Ne3 Nb6 17.Bd2 Be6 18.b3 f6 19.Qe2 Bf8 20.Red1 Rd7 21.c4 bxc4 22.bxc4 Bc5 23.Nd5 Nd4 24.Nxd4 Bxd4 25.Rab1 Qf8 26.a4 Rad8 27.Bb4 Bc5 28.a5 Nxd5 29.cxd5 Bf7 30.Bxc5 Qxc5 31.Ba4 Rd6 32.Qe1 f5 33.Rdc1 Qa7 34.exf5 Qd4 35.Rb4 Qxd5 36.Rxc7 Qxa5

(Diagram)

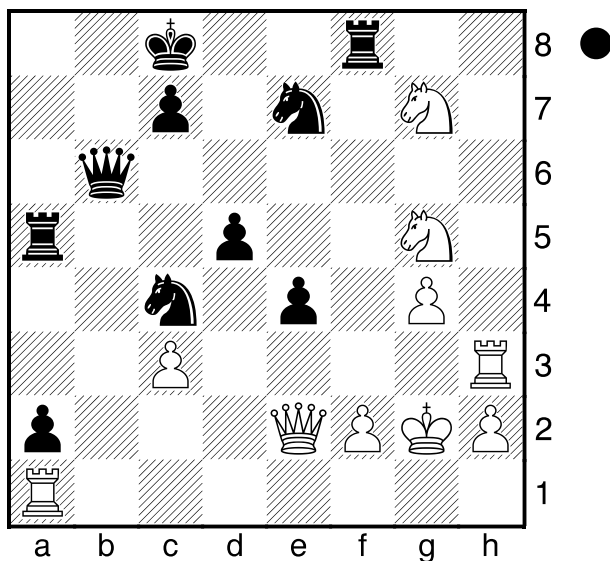


37.Rxf7! Qxa4 38.Rxc7+ Kf8 39.Rxa4
Rd1 40.Qxd1 Rxd1+ 41.Kh2 Kxc7
42.Rxa6 e4 43.g4 h5 44.Re6 Re1
45.Kg3
1-0

□ Caruana,Fabiano B00 2794
■ Carlsen,Magnus 2830
CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (3.2)

White's horses wander far afield as black penetrates on the queenside. 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nf3 e6 5.Bd3 Bxd3 6.Qxd3 Qd7 7.c3 f6 8.0-0 fxe5 9.dxe5 a5 10.Re1 Bc5 11.Nbd2 a4 12.b4 axb3 13.Nxb3 Bb6 14.Be3 Bxe3 15.Rxe3 b6 16.Ng5 Nge7 17.Nxh7 Nf5 18.Rh3 Kd8 19.a4 Nxe5 20.Qe2 Ng6 21.Qg4 Ne5 22.Qf4 Nf7 23.a5 Kc8 24.Re1 bxa5 25.Qd2 e5 26.Ra1 Qb5 27.Qc2 N7d6 28.Nd2 a4 29.g4 Ne7 30.Nf3 Nc4 31.Nfg5 a3 32.Nf7 Re8 33.Nhg5 Qb2 34.Qd1 a2 35.Ne6 Qb6 36.Nfg5 e4 37.Kg2 Ra5 38.Nxc7 Rf8 39.Qe2

(Diagram)



Qb1!
0-1

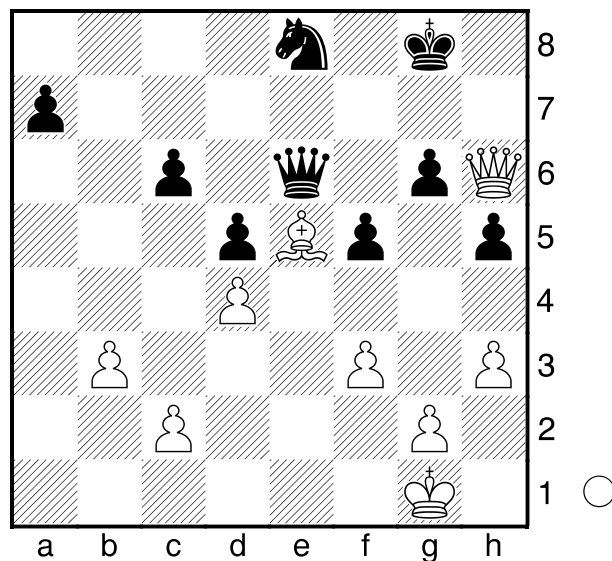
□ Carlsen,Magnus
■ Nakamura,Hikaru

C42
2830
2788

CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (4.3)

White's incessant pressure nets a pawn and the game in another master-class from Carlsen. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nxe4 4.d3 Nf6 5.d4 d5 6.Bd3 Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bf4 Re8 9.Re1 c5 10.Nc3 c4 11.Be2 Nc6 12.Bf3 Be6 13.Qd2 Be7 14.b3 cxb3 15.axb3 Bb4 16.Nd3 Bxc3 17.Qxc3 Bg4 18.Rxe8+ Qxe8 19.Bxg4 Nxg4 20.Re1 Qc8 21.h3 Nf6 22.Nb4 Ne4 23.Nxc6 bxc6 24.Qa5 h5 25.f3 Nf6 26.Re5 Qd7 27.Qe1 Re8 28.Qh4 Re6 29.Qg5 g6 30.Rxe6 Qxe6 31.Be5 Ne8 32.Qh6 f5

(Diagram)

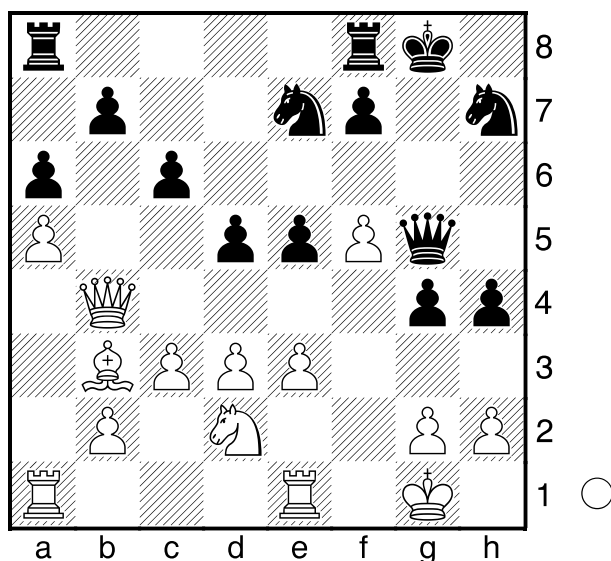


33.Qh8+ Kf7 34.Qh7+ Kf8 35.Qxa7 Nf6 36.Qc7 Ke8 37.Kh2 h4 38.Bd6 Qd7 39.Qb8+ Qd8 40.Qxd8+ Kxd8 41.Bf4 Nh7 42.Bd2 Kd7 43.Be1 g5 44.f4 gxf4 45.Bxh4 Ke6 46.Kg1 Kf7 47.Kf2 Nf8 48.Kf3 Ne6 49.c3 Kg6 50.Be1 Ng5+ 51.Kxf4
1-0

□ Niemann,Hans Moke **C54**
■ Gukesh D **2659**
13th London Chess Classic 2023 (9.4) **2746**

21.Ra4! wins a pawn out of nowhere and black collapses. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 Nf6 5.0-0 d6 6.c3 a6 7.a4 Ba7 8.Re1 h6 9.a5 g5 10.Be3 g4 11.Nfd2 Bxe3 12.fxe3 Nh7 13.Nf1 h5 14.Ng3 Qg5 15.Nd2 Ne7 16.Qa4+ c6 17.Qb4 h4 18.Nf5 Bxf5 19.exf5 d5 20.Bb3 0-0

(Diagram)



21.Ra4! g3 22.Qxh4 Qxh4 23.Rxh4 gxh2+ 24.Rxh2 f6 25.e4 Rf7 26.Nf3 Rg7 27.d4 exd4 28.Nxd4 Ng5 29.exd5 Nxd5 30.Rh6 Kf7 31.Kf1 Rag8 32.c4 Nc7 33.c5+ Nd5 34.Bxd5+ cxd5 35.Ne6
1-0

□ Abdusattorov,Nodirbek

■ Nakamura,Hikaru

CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (5.1)

B33

2727

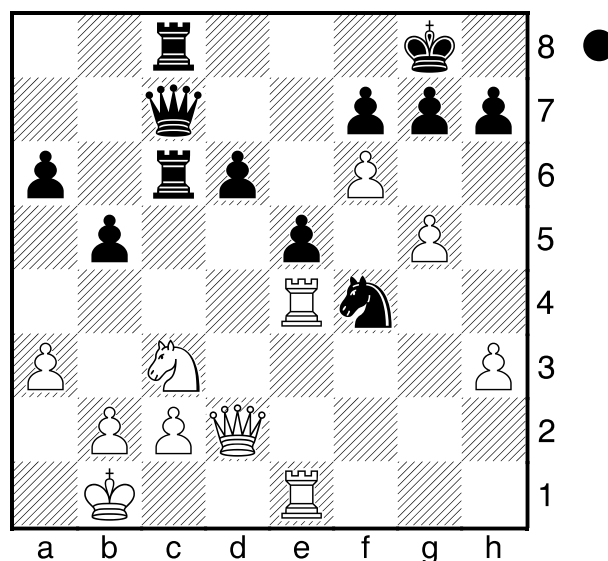
2788

A classic exchange sacrifice tips the scales in black's favor. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Ne2 Bc5 6.Ng3 Nf6 7.Nc3 d6 8.Bd3?

[8.Be2]

8...Ng4 9.Be3 Bxe3 10.fxe3 Nxe3 11.Qd2 Ng4 12.0-0-0 Be6 13.h3 Nf6 14.Bb5 Rc8 15.Nf5 Bxf5 16.exf5 a6 17.Bxc6+ Rxc6 18.g4 Qa5 19.g5 Nh5 20.Rhe1 0-0 21.a3 Nf4 22.f6 Rfc8 23.Re3 b5 24.Kb1 Qb6 25.Re4 Qc7 26.Rde1

(Diagram)



Rxc3! 27.bxc3 Ne6 28.Rd1 Rd8 29.fxg7 d5 30.Rh4 e4 31.Qe3 Qe5 32.Qb6 Qxg5 33.Rg4 Qe5 34.Qxa6 e3 35.Qb6 Rc8 36.Rg2 Nf4 37.Rh2 Qxc3 38.Qd4 e2
0-1

□ So,Wesley

■ Carlsen,Magnus

CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (5.3)

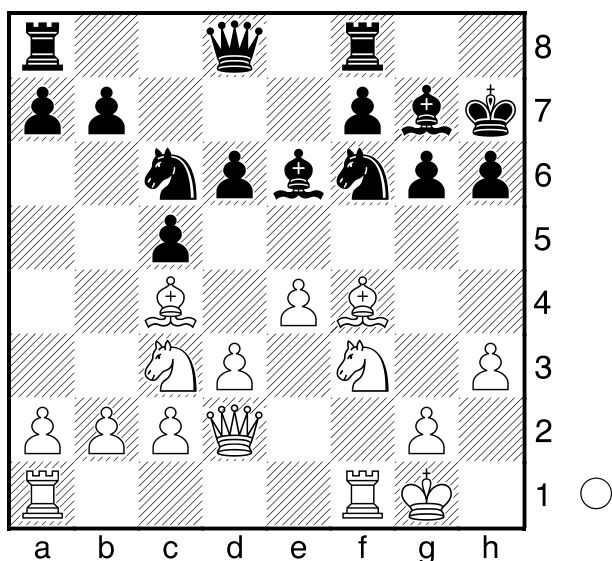
B30

2752

2830

A brilliant sustained attack rocks the world #1 back on his heels. 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 e5 4.Bc4 g6 5.d3 h6 6.h3 d6 7.Nh2 Bg7 8.0-0 Nf6 9.f4 exf4 10.Bxf4 0-0 11.Qd2 Kh7 12.Nf3 Be6

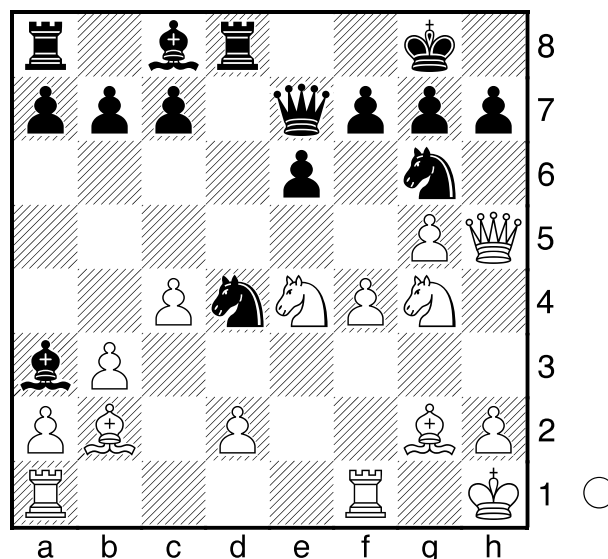
(Diagram)



13.Ng5+! hxc5 14.Bxc5 Ne5 15.Qf2
Ned7 16.e5! dxe5 17.Ne4 Qb6
18.Qh4+ Nh5 19.g4 Bxc4 20.gxh5
Bd5 21.Nf6+! Nxf6 22.Rxf6 Qxf6?
[22...Bxf6 23.hxc6+ Kxc6 24.Qh6+
Kf5 25.Rf1+ Ke6 26.Rxf6+ Kd7
27.Rxb6 axb6 28.Qf6 Rae8 29.h4±]
23.Bxf6 g5 24.Qxg5 Bxf6 25.Qf5+
Kg7 26.h6+ Kxh6 27.Qxf6+ Kh7
28.Qf5+ Kh6 29.Qf6+ Kh7 30.Kf2
Rg8 31.Qh4+ Kg6 32.Rg1+ Kf5
33.Qh7+ Rg6 34.Rxg6 fxc6 35.Qd7+
Be6 36.Qxb7 Rh8 37.Kg3 g5 38.Qg7
Rh4 39.b3 a5 40.a4 e4 41.dxe4+
Kxe4 42.Qg6+ Bf5 43.Qc6+ Kd4
44.c3+ Ke5 45.Qxc5+ Kf6 46.Qb6+
Be6 47.Kg2 Re4 48.b4 axb4 49.cxb4
Re2+ 50.Kg3 Ra2 51.Qd4+ Kf5
52.Qd3+ Ke5 53.a5 Bd5 54.Qe3+ Kf5
55.Qd3+ Ke5 56.Kg4 Rg2+ 57.Kh5
Be4 58.Qc3+ Kf4 59.a6 Rc2
1-0

Carlsen,Magnus A14
2830
 Vachier-Lagrave,Maxime 2731
 CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (6.1)

Black is destroyed out of the opening.
1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7
5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 d4 7.e3 Nc6 8.exd4
Nxd4 9.Bb2 Bc5 10.Nc3 Re8 11.Ne5
Bd6 12.f4 Bc5 13.Kh1 Qe7 14.g4 Rd8
15.g5 Nd7 16.Ne4 Nf8 17.Qh5 Ng6
18.Ng4 Ba3

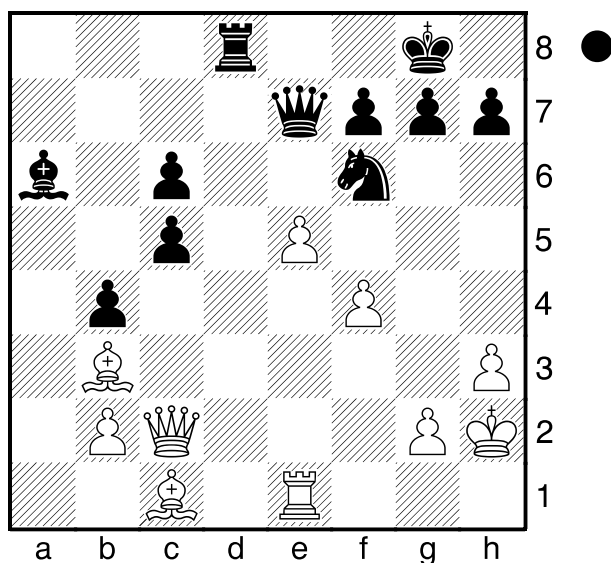


19.Ngf6+! gxf6 20.gxf6 Qb4 21.Ng5
Kf8 22.Qxh7 Rd7 23.Bxd4
1-0

Vachier Lagrave,Maxime C95
2731
 Abdusattorov,Nodirbek 2727
 CCT Finals Advancement 2023 (7.3)

24...Ng4+! forces a king march into
enemy territory with a predictable result.
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4
Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6
8.c3 0-0 9.h3 Nb8 10.d4 Nbd7 11.c4
Bb7 12.Nc3 b4 13.Nd5 a5 14.a3 c6
15.Nxe7+ Qxe7 16.axb4 axb4
17.Rxa8 Rxa8 18.c5 dxc5 19.dxe5

Nxe5 20.Nxe5 Qxe5 21.Qc2 Ba6
22.f4 Qe7 23.Kh2 Rd8 24.e5



Ng4+! 25.Kg3

[25.hxg4 Qh4+ 26.Kg1 Qxe1+-+]

25...Rd3+ 26.Kxg4 h5+ 27.Kxh5

[27.Kf5 Rd4! Intending both 28...g6# and 28...Bd3+ wins.]

27...g6+ 28.Kg4 Bc8+

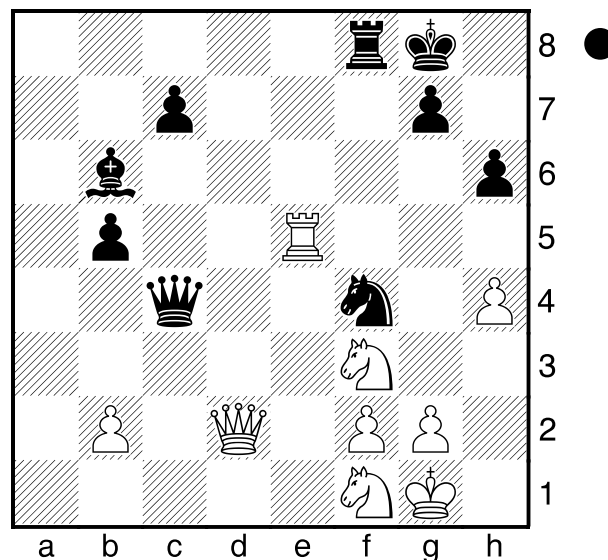
[28...Bc8+ 29.f5 Bxf5+ 30.Kf4 Qh4+ 31.g4 Qh6+ 32.g5 Qh4#]

0-1

□ **Carlsen,Magnus** **C78** **2830**
 ■ **Caruana,Fabiano** **2794**
 CCT Finals KO 2023 (1.3) 13.12.2023

Black finds a nice shot that nets 3 extra pawns - too much of a deficit even for Carlsen. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Bc5 6.c3 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.a4 Bg4 9.d3 0-0 10.Nbd2 Bb6 11.h3 Bd7 12.axb5 axb5 13.Rxa8 Qxa8 14.Re1 Qa7 15.Qe2 Ne7 16.Nf1 Ng6 17.Bg5 Nh5 18.d4 Nh4 19.Qd2 Be6 20.Bxe6 fxe6 21.N1h2 exd4 22.cxd4 h6 23.Bxf4 Nxf4 24.h4 Qa4 25.Qd1 e5 26.dxe5 Qb4 27.Qc2 dxe5 28.Rd1 Ne6 29.Qd2 Qxe4 30.Re1

Qc4 31.Rxe5 Nf4 32.Nf1

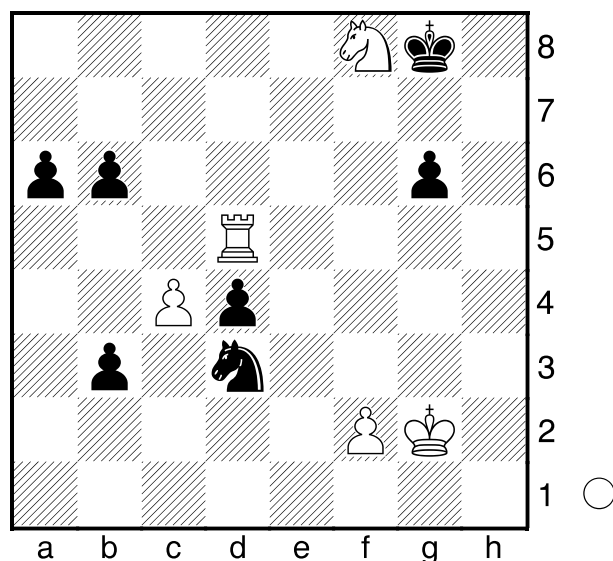
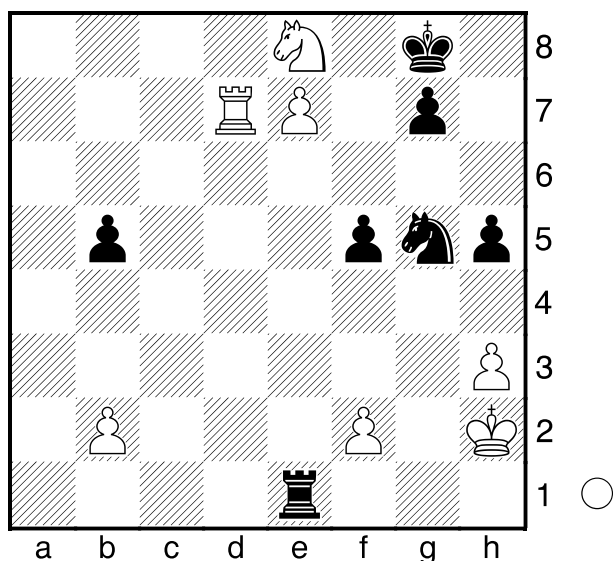


Nxg2! 33.Kxg2 Qg4+ 34.Kh2 Qxf3
 35.Ng3 Qxf2+ 36.Qxf2 Rxf2+ 37.Kh3
 Rxb2 38.Re7 Rf2 39.Kg4 Kf8 40.Re5
 c6 41.Ne4 Re2 42.Re6 b4 43.Kf5 Rc2
 44.Nd6 Kg8 45.Nc8 Bc5 46.Rxc6 b3
 47.Rc7 b2 48.Rb7 Kh7 49.h5 Ba3
0-1

□ **Carlsen,Magnus** **C83** **2830**
 ■ **Caruana,Fabiano** **2794**
 CCT Finals KO 2023 (1.10) 14.12.2023

Another technical masterpiece from Carlsen, with a cute shot at the end. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.d4 Be7 7.Re1 b5 8.Bb3 d5 9.dxe5 Be6 10.c3 0-0 11.h3 Qd7 12.Bc2 Rad8 13.Nbd2 Nxd2 14.Qxd2 Bf5 15.Bxf5 Qxf5 16.Qf4 Qxf4 17.Bxf4 d4 18.Rac1 dxc3 19.Rxc3 Nb4 20.Rxc7 Rfe8 21.Bg5 Bxg5 22.Nxg5 f6 23.Nf7 Rd2 24.e6 h5 25.Re4 Nxa2 26.Rc6 Rd5 27.Rxa6 Nc1 28.Rd6 Rc5 29.Rd7 Nb3 30.Nd6 Rc1+ 31.Kh2 Nd2 32.g4 Nxe4 33.Nxe8 Re1 34.e7 f5 35.g5 Nxg5

(Diagram)



36.Nxg7!
1-0

46.Rd6 b2 47.Rxb6 a5 48.Rb3 a4
49.Rb8 a3 50.Ne6+ Kf7 51.Ng5+ Kg7
52.Rb7+ Kg8 53.Ne4 a2 54.Nf6+ Kf8
55.Rd7 Nf4+ 56.Kf3 Nh5
0-1

Carlsen,Magnus B50 2830
 So,Wesley 2752
 CCT Finals KO 2023 (2.2) 16.12.2023

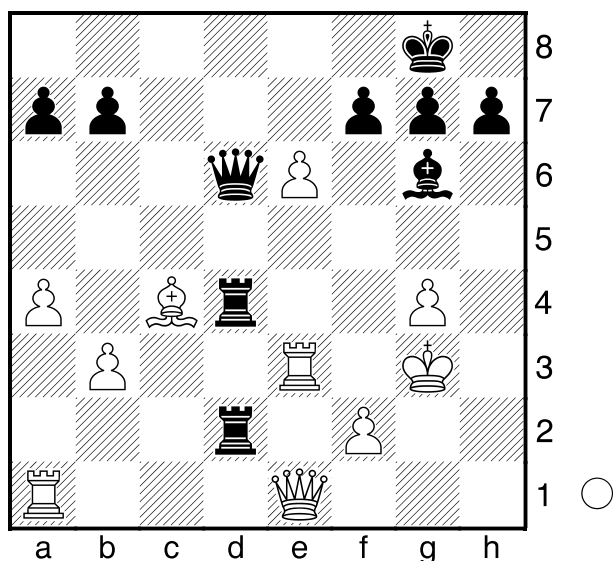
Dommaraju Gukesh B30 2720
 Alexandr Predke 2689
 Chennai Grand Masters 2023 (4.1)

An incredible fighting game where Carlsen's extra rook is powerless against the black passed pawns. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 e6 5.0-0 Be7 6.a4 d5 7.Bb5+ Kf8 8.e5 Ng8 9.a5 a6 10.Ba4 Qxa5 11.c4 d4 12.Nbd2 Qc7 13.Ne4 Bd7 14.Bxd7 Nxd7 15.Bf4 h6 16.h4 g6 17.b4 cxb4 18.Nxd4 Rd8 19.Qf3 Kg7 20.Nd6 Bxd6 21.exd6 Qc8 22.Rfe1 Ngf6 23.Nb3 Rhe8 24.Bc1 e5 25.Bb2 b6 26.g4 Kg8 27.Nd2 Re6 28.g5 hxg5 29.hxg5 Nh7 30.Qg3 Rxd6 31.d4 Rxd4 32.Bxd4 exd4 33.Re7 Nc5 34.Rae1 Rf8 35.Qh4 b3 36.Kg2 Qf5 37.R7e5 Qd7 38.Rd5 Qc7 39.Rh1 f6 40.Ne4 fxg5 41.Nxg5 Nd3 42.Ne6 Qf7 43.Qxh7+? [43.Nxf8!+-] 43...Qxh7 44.Rxh7 Kxh7 45.Nxf8+ Kg8-+

(Diagram)

White's king narrowly escapes execution in this thriller. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 e5 4.0-0 Be7 5.Re1 Nd4 6.Nxd4 cxd4 7.c3 Nf6 8.cxd4 exd4 9.d3 0-0 10.Nd2 d5 11.e5 Nd7 12.Nf3 Qb6 13.Ba4 Nc5 14.Bc2 Bg4 15.h3 Bh5 16.g4 Bg6 17.Nxd4 Ne6 18.Nf3 Rac8 19.Bb3 Qb5 20.d4 Bb4 21.Re3 Nf4 22.Bd2 Nxh3+ 23.Kg2 Nf4+ 24.Kg3 Ne6 25.a4 Qa5 26.Bxb4 Qxb4 27.Bxd5 Rc2 28.b3 Rd8 29.Bc4 Nxd4 30.Nxd4 Rd2 31.Qe1 R8xd4 32.e6 Qd6+

(Diagram)

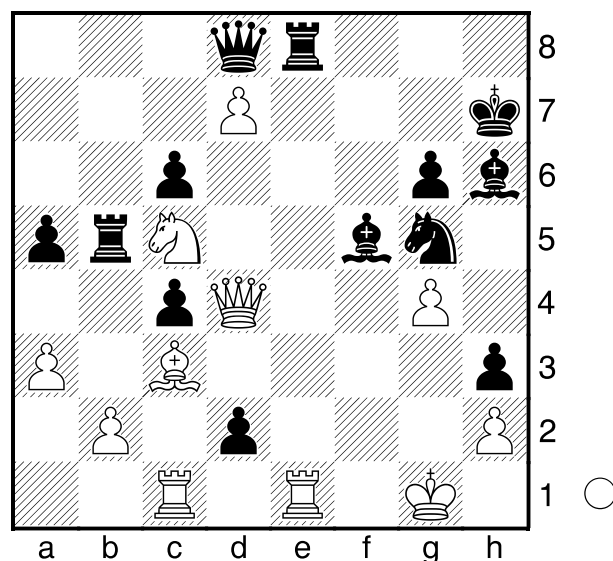


33.Kh3 h5 34.e7 Rxc4 35.e8Q+ Kh7
36.Bxf7 Qf6 37.Bxc6+ Kh6 38.Qh8+
Kxc6 39.Re6 Rh4+ 40.Kg2 Rg4+
41.Kf1 Rxf2+ 42.Qxf2 Qxe6 43.Re1
Qa6+ 44.Re2
1-0

Conrad Holt **D80**
2548
 Shakhriyar Mamedyarov **2746**
 World Rapid 2023 (3.20) 26.12.2023

Multiple promotions and sacrifices - this game has it all, and then some. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.e3 e6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bd3 Bg7 7.Nge2 0-0 8.0-0 a5 9.Bd2 Re8 10.Rc1 c6 11.f3 b5 12.Qe1 Nbd7 13.Qf2 Nb6 14.a3 Nc4 15.Bxc4 bxc4 16.Na4 Rb8 17.Rfe1 h5 18.Bc3 Bh6 19.Ng3 h4 20.Nf1 h3 21.g3 Nh7 22.Nd2 Ng5 23.e4 dxe4 24.fxe4 f5 25.d5 fxe4 26.Qd4 Kh7 27.d6 Rb5 28.Nc5 Bf5 29.g4 e3 30.d7 exd2

(Diagram)

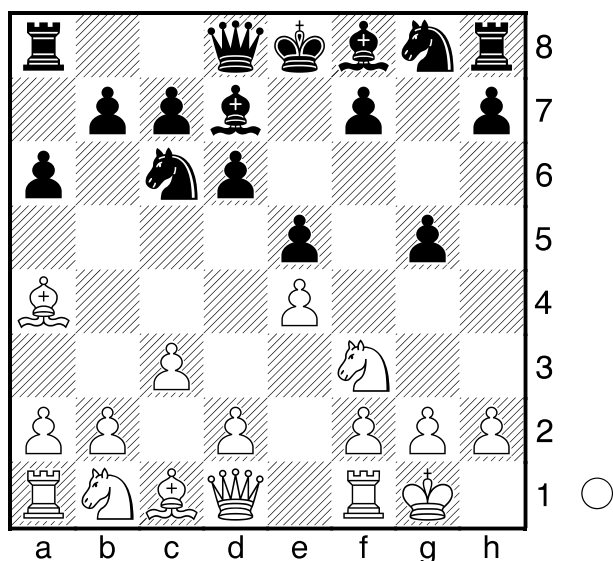


31.dxe8Q Qxe8 32.Rxe8 dxc1Q+
33.Kf2 Qg1+ 34.Kxc1 Nf3+ 35.Kf2
Nxd4 36.Bxd4 Bg7 37.Re7 Bxc4
38.Bxc7 g5 39.Bd4+ Kg6 40.Kg3 Bf5
41.Rg7+ Kh5 42.Rf7 Bg6 43.Rf8 Bb1
44.Kxh3
1-0

Carlsen,Magnus **C72**
2830
 Gareyev,Timur **2570**
 FIDE World Rapid-ch Open 2023 (5.1)

Black's king's side play boomerangs in text-book fashion. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.0-0 Bd7 6.c3 g5?!

(Diagram)

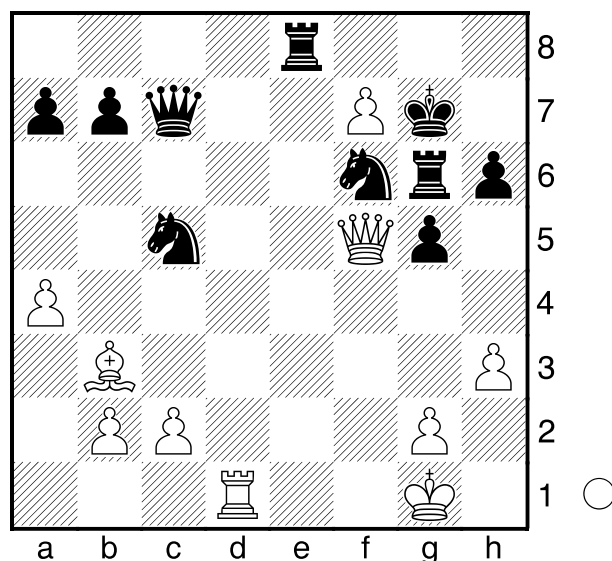


7.d4 g4 8.Ne1 h5 9.Be3 Bh6 10.Qe2 Qf6 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Nd3 Nge7 13.Nd2 Ng6 14.Nc5 Bc8 15.Rad1 Nf4 16.Bxf4 Bxf4 17.Nd3 0-0 18.g3 Bh6 19.f4 gxf3 20.Nxf3 Bg4 21.Qg2 Qe6 22.Bb3 Qe7 23.h3 Be6 24.Nh4 Be3+ 25.Kh2 Qg5 26.Nf5 Bb6 27.h4 Qf6 28.Qe2 Qh8 29.g4 Qh7 30.g5 Kh8 31.Nh6 Bxb3 32.axb3 f6 33.Qxh5 Be3 34.Rde1 fxg5 35.Rxf8+ Rxf8 36.Rxe3 1-0

Cheparinov, Ivan **B10 2663**
 Rapport, Richard **2731**
 FIDE World Rapid-ch Open 2023 (5.3)

Fortune favors the bold: 18.Nd5!? induces a black mistake (20...Bxf2+?) setting up a beautiful finish. 1.e4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.d3 Qc7 4.Nc3 dxe4 5.dxe4 Nd7 6.a4 Ngf6 7.Bc4 Nb6 8.Bb3 Bg4 9.h3 Bxf3 10.Qxf3 e6 11.Bg5 Nbd7 12.0-0 Bd6 13.Rad1 h6 14.Be3 g5 15.Rfe1 Rg8 16.Bd4 Rg6 17.Qe2 Be5 18.Nd5!? cxd5 19.exd5 Bxd4 20.dxe6 Bxf2+? [20...Nc5! 21.Rxd4 Nxb3 22.Rd7! Nxd7 23.exd7+ Kxd7 24.Qe7+ Kc6

25.Qe4+=]
 21.Qxf2 Nc5 22.exf7+ Kf8 23.Qf5 Kg7 24.Re8 Rxe8

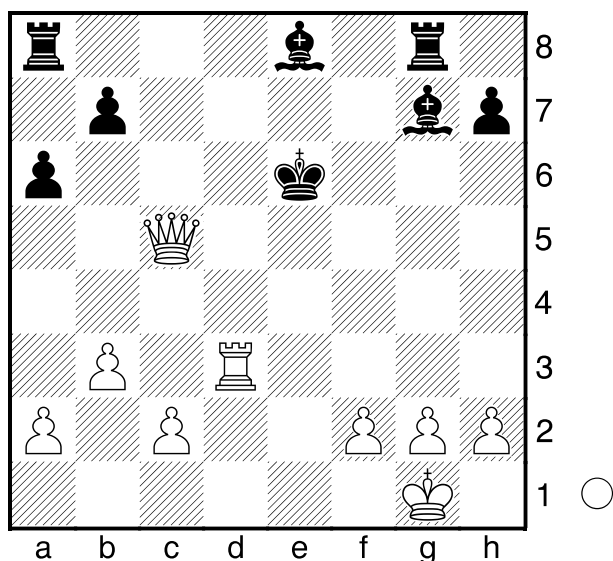


25.Qxf6+!
 [25.Qxf6+! Kxf6 (Or 25...Rxf6 26.fxe8N+!) 26.fxe8N+!+-]
 1-0

Anastasia Bodnaruk **B40 2340**
 Umida Omonova **2257**
 World Rapid Women 2023 (5.4) 27.12.23

Once again sharp attacking play is rewarded. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.b3 Nc6 4.Bb2 d5 5.exd5 Qxd5 6.Nc3 Qd8 7.Bb5 Qc7 8.0-0 a6 9.Bxc6+ Qxc6 10.d4 Nf6 11.Re1 Be7 12.Ne5 Qc7 13.dxc5 Bxc5 14.Ng4 Nxg4 15.Qxg4 f6 16.Qh5+ Kf8 17.Nd5 Qc6 18.Nf4 Kg8 19.Bxf6!? [19.Rad1+- was good enough.] 19...gxf6 20.Qh6 Bf8 21.Qxf6 Bg7 22.Qg5 Kf8 23.Rad1 Bd7 24.Rd3 Rg8 25.Qh5 Be8 26.Nxe6+ Qxe6 27.Qc5+ Kf7 28.Rxe6 Kxe6

(Diagram)

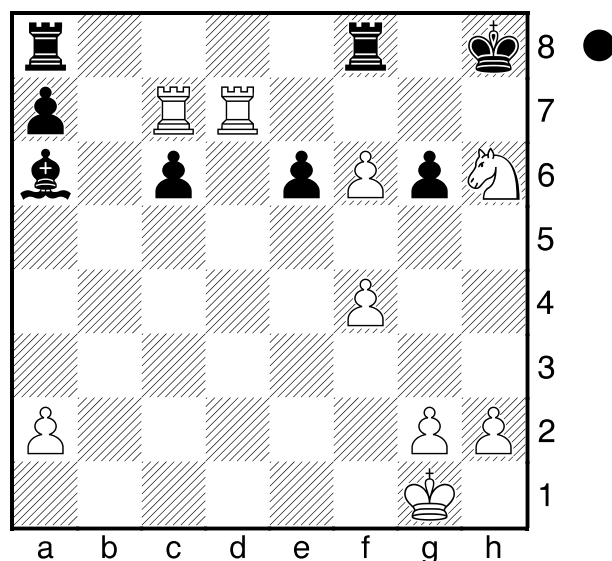


29.Qd6+ Kf5 30.Rd5+ Ke4 31.Qe6+ Kf4 32.Qe3+ [32.Qe3+ Kg4 33.Qg3#] 1-0

Koneru,Humpy **D39 2444**
 Zhai,Mo **2351**
 FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Champion (7)

The final position is one of utter black helplessness. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.e4 Bb4 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bxf6 Qxf6 8.Bxc4 c5 9.0-0 cxd4 10.e5 Qd8 11.Ne4 0-0 12.Nxd4 Be7 13.Rc1 Qb6 14.Qg4 Rd8 15.Rfd1 Kh8 16.Nb5 Nc6 17.Qf4 Kg8 18.Nbd6 Rf8 19.Nf6+! Kh8 20.Qe4 Bxf6 21.exf6 Qxb2 22.Bd3 g6 23.Qf4 Kh7 24.Rc5 Qb4 25.Rc4 Qb2 26.Be4 Qe5 27.Qxe5 Nxe5 28.Rc7 Kg8 29.f4 Nc6 30.Bxc6 bxc6 31.Nxf7 Ba6 32.Nxh6+ Kh8 33.Rdd7

(Diagram)

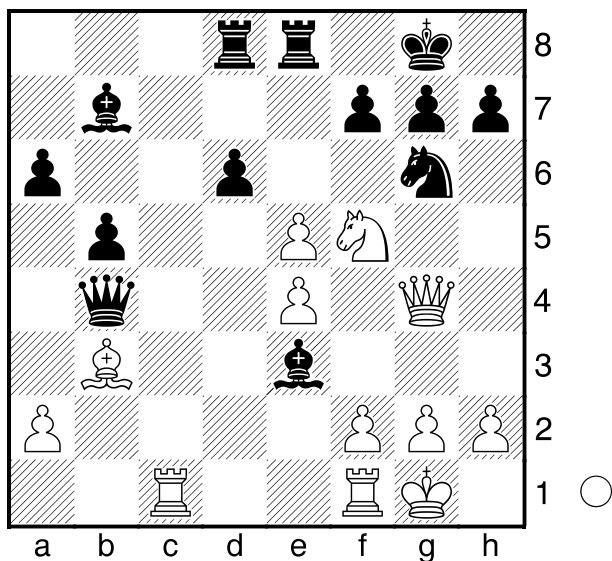


1-0

Bodnaruk,Anastasia **B23 2265**
 Zhu,Jiner **2431**
 FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Champion (8)

White's 23rd move rips black to shreds. 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Bc4 e6 5.Nge2 Qc7 6.d3 a6 7.Nxd4 cxd4 8.Ne2 b5 9.Bb3 Bc5 10.c3 dxc3 11.bxc3 Ne7 12.0-0 Bb7 13.d4 Bb6 14.Bc2 d6 15.Be3 0-0 16.Rc1 e5 17.Ng3 Rad8 18.Qh5 Ng6 19.Nf5 Rfe8 20.Qg4 Qxc3 21.Bb3 Qb4 22.dxe5 Bxe3

(Diagram)

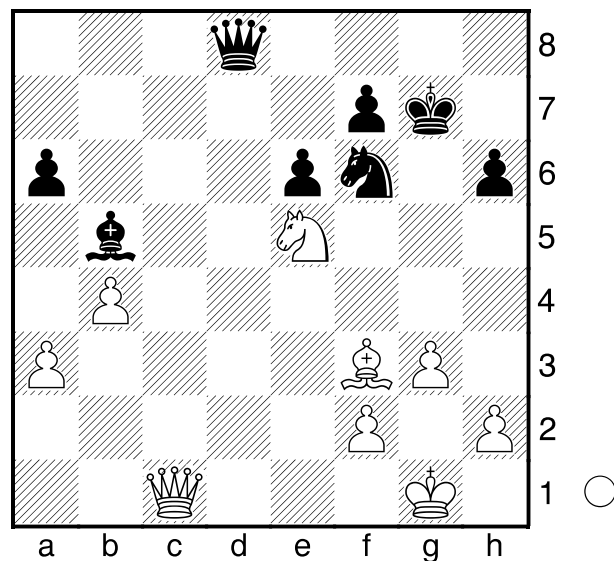


23.Bxf7+! Kxf7 24.Rc7+ Kg8 25.Rxg7+ Kf8 26.fxe3 Qxe4 27.Rxg6 Qxg4 28.Rxg4 Rxe5 29.Nxd6+ Ke7 30.Nxb7 Rd2 31.e4 h5 32.Rg7+ Ke6 33.Rgf7 Rg5 34.R7f2 Rd7 35.Rf6+ Ke5 36.Nc5 Rd2 37.Re6+ Kd4 38.Nb3+ 1-0

□ **Vidit,Santosh Gujrathi** **D27 2737**
 ■ **Paravyan,David** **2612**
 FIDE World Rapid-ch Open 2023 (8.8)

A cute shot wraps the game up. 1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 e6 5.Bxc4 c5 6.0-0 Nc6 7.Nc3 a6 8.Bd3 cxd4 9.exd4 Be7 10.Bg5 0-0 11.Rc1 h6 12.Bf4 Bd6 13.Qd2 Bxf4 14.Qxf4 Bd7 15.Ne5 Nb4 16.Bb1 Bc6 17.Rfd1 Rc8 18.Qd2 Qd6 19.a3 Nbd5 20.Nxd5 Nxd5 21.Be4 Ba4 22.Re1 Rfd8 23.g3 Rxc1 24.Qxc1 Bb5 25.Qc2 Nf6 26.Bxb7 Qxd4 27.Bf3 Qb6 28.b4 g6 29.Nxg6 Bd3 30.Qc6 Qd4 31.Ne5 Bb5 32.Qc1 Kg7 33.Rd1 Qb6 34.Rxd8 Qxd8

(Diagram)

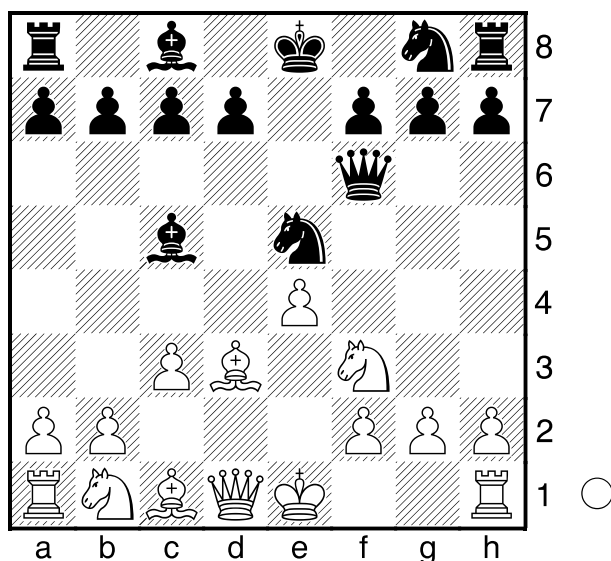


35.Qxh6+! Kg8 36.Qg5+ Kf8 37.a4 Bxa4 38.Ng4 Qd3 39.Qxf6 Bb5 40.h4 Ke8 1-0

□ **Surya Shekhar Ganguly** **C45 2578**
 ■ **Mukhiddin Madaminov** **2494**
 World Rapid 2023 (8.47) 27.12.2023

An unbelievable disaster from the 2023 World Rapid Championship. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Qf6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.c3 Bc5 7.Bd3 Ne5

(Diagram)

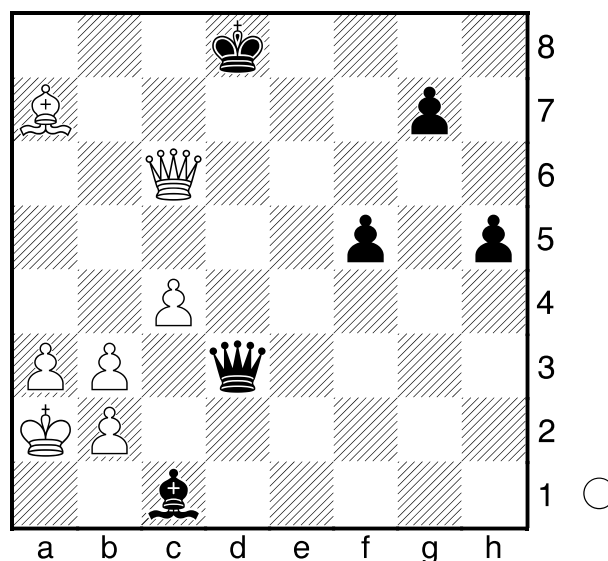


8.Nxe5?? Qxf2#
0-1

Alireza Firouzja **B30**
 Gata Kamsky **2763**
 Rouen Open Rouen FRA (6) 28.12.2023 **2634**

This lovely attacking game cemented Firouzja's place in the 2024 Candidates Tournament. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 e6 4.Bxc6 bxc6 5.d3 Ne7 6.Qe2 Ng6 7.h4 h5 8.e5 f6 9.Nbd2 d6 10.exd6 Bxd6 11.Nc4 Be7 12.Be3 e5 13.Nfd2 Bg4 14.f3 Be6 15.Qf2 f5 16.Bxc5 Bxh4 17.g3 Bg5 18.Nd6+ Kd7 19.0-0-0 Qa5 20.a3 Rab8 21.f4 exf4 22.N6c4 Bxc4 23.dxc4 Kc8 24.gxf4 Nxf4 25.Kb1 Rd8 26.Nb3 Qc7 27.Rxd8+ Qxd8 28.Bxa7 Rxb3 29.cxb3 Qd3+ 30.Ka2 Ne2 31.Qg2 Nc1+ 32.Rxc1 Bxc1 33.Qxc6+ Kd8

(Diagram)

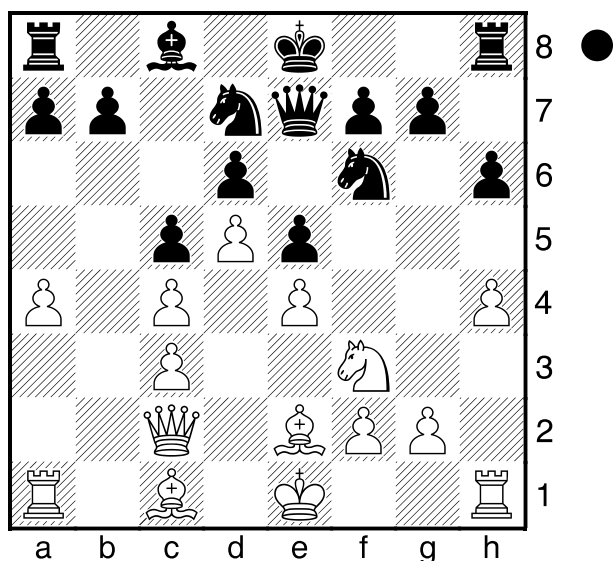


34.Qe6! Qd7
[34...Qd2 35.Bb6#]
35.Qg8+ Kc7 36.Qb8+
1-0

Vladimir Fedoseev **E21**
 Magnus Carlsen **2683**
 World Rapid 2023 (10.1) 28.12.2023 **2830**

This is Carlsen's masterpiece, ala Nimzovitch and Petrosian, from the 2023 World Rapid Championship. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 d6 6.Qc2 Qe7 7.a4 c5 8.e4 e5 9.d5 Nbd7 10.h4 h6 11.Be2

(Diagram)

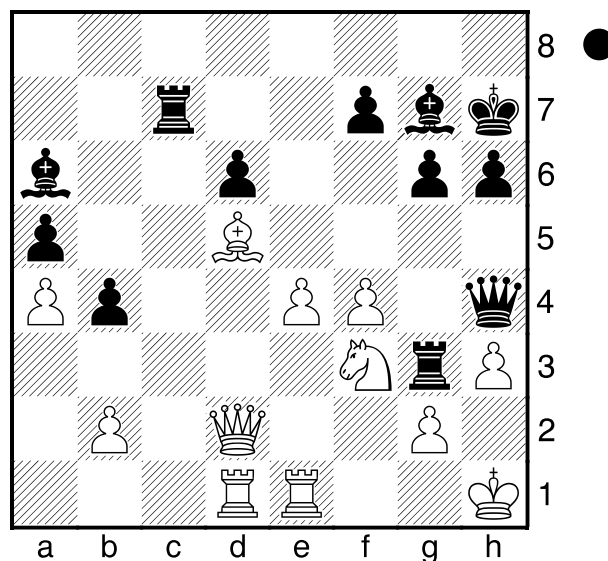


Kd8! 12.Nd2 Kc7 13.Nf1 g6 14.g4 a5
 15.h5 gxh5 16.gxh5 Nb6 17.Ng3 Bd7
 18.Qb3 Ne8 19.Be3 Ng7 20.Kd2 f5
 21.exf5 Nxf5 22.Rab1 Ra6 23.Nxf5
 Bxf5 24.Rb2 Qg7 25.Qd1 Rg8 26.Kc1
 Qh7 27.Ra2 Nd7 28.Rb2 Nf6 29.Rg1
 Rxc1 30.Qxc1 Ra8 31.f4 Rg8 32.Qh2
 e4 33.Rb1 Qd7 34.Bd1 Bg4 35.Bc2
 Qf5 36.Kb2 Bxh5 37.Re1 b6 38.Kb3
 Rg6 39.Qh1 Rg3 40.Qh4 Rh3 41.Qf2
 Bf3 42.Rg1 Ng4 43.Qe1 h5 44.Bc1
 Rh2 45.Qg3 Be2 46.Re1 Bxc4+
 47.Kxc4 Rxc2 48.Qh4 Kd7 49.Be3
 Rg2 50.Qh1 Rg3 51.Bc1 Nf6 52.Rd1
 Rd3 53.Rxd3 exd3 54.Kb5 Qxd5
 55.Qh3+ Kc7 56.c4 Qc6+ 57.Ka6 b5+
0-1

R Praggnanandhaa **C90**
 Daniil Dubov **2665**
 World Blitz 2023 (7.4) **2763**
 29.12.2023

A couple of nice shots and it's all over.
 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3
 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.Re1 d6 7.c3 Na5
 8.Bb5 a6 9.Ba4 b5 10.Bc2 c5
 11.Nbd2 Re8 12.Nf1 h6 13.Ng3 Bf8
 14.h3 Nc6 15.d4 cxd4 16.cxd4 exd4

17.Nxd4 Ne5 18.Bf4 Bb7 19.Ndf5 Rc8
 20.Bb3 a5 21.a4 b4 22.Qd4 Rc7
 23.Rad1 Rd7 24.Kh1 Kh7 25.f3 g6
 26.Ne3 Bg7 27.Qd2 Ba6 28.Bxe5
 Rxe5 29.Nd5 Nxd5 30.Bxd5 Qh4
 31.Ne2 Rc7 32.Nd4 Rg5 33.f4 Rg3
 34.Nf3

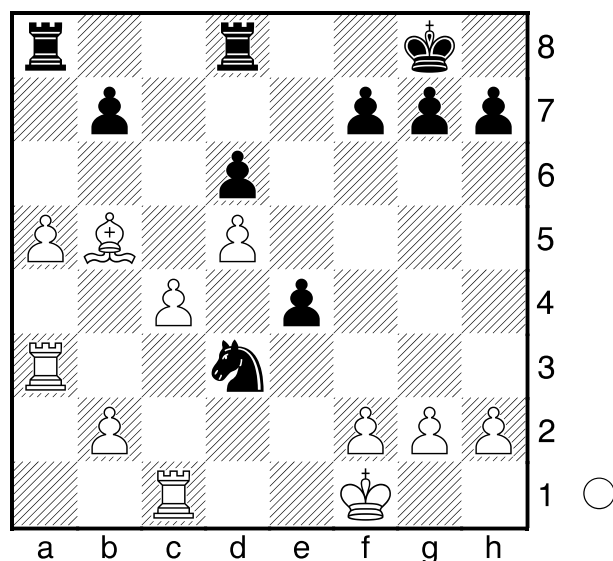
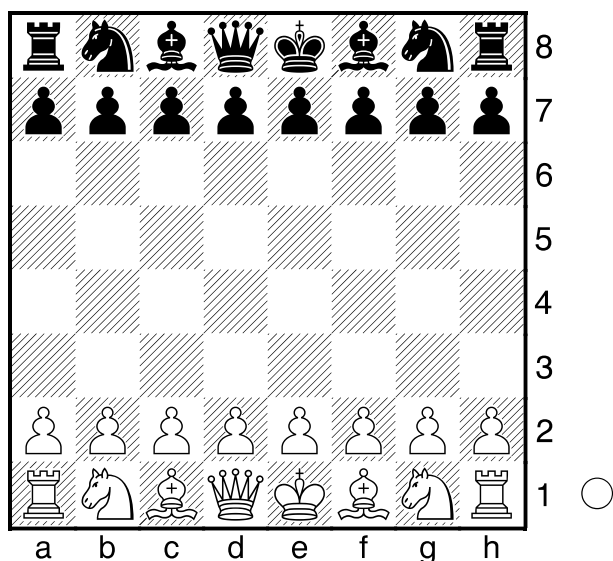


Rxf3! 35.gxf3 Qxh3+ 36.Kg1 Bd4+!
 37.Qxd4 Qg3+ 38.Kh1 Rc2
0-1

Dubov, Daniil **A00**
 Nepomniachtchi, Ian **2710**
 FIDE World Blitz-ch Open 2023 (11.2) **2771**

This obviously pre-arranged draw drew condemnation from chess players around the world, and earned both players a double-forfeit in the tournament. 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.Nd4 Nd5
 3.Nb3 Nb6 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.Ne4 Ne5
 6.Ng5 Ng4 7.Nf3 Nf6 8.Ng1 Ng8
 9.Nc5 Nc4 10.Na4 Na5 11.Nc3 Nc6
 12.Nb1 Nb8

(Diagram)



1/2-1/2

Vachier-Lagrave,Maxime **B33**

Carlsen,Magnus **2748**
 FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship 202 (13.1) **2887**

A gutsy exchange sacrifice hands Carlsen his only loss in the 2023 World Blitz Championship. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Nd5 Nxd5 8.exd5 Ne7 9.a4 Ng6 10.a5 Be7 11.Be3 0-0 12.Bxa7 Bd7 13.Bb6 Qc8 14.Ra3 Bxb5 15.Bxb5 Bd8 16.Bxd8 Rxd8 17.0-0 Qc5 18.c4 Qb4 19.Qa1 Nf4 20.Re1 Qd2 21.Kf1 e4 22.Qc1 Qxc1 23.Rxc1 Nd3

(Diagram)

24.Rxd3! exd3 25.b4 Rac8 26.Rd1 Rc7 27.Rxd3 Re7 28.Re3 Kf8 29.Ke2 f5 30.Kd3 Rxe3+ 31.fxe3 Ke7 32.Kd4 Rf8 33.c5 f4 34.e4 f3 35.gxf3 Rf4 36.a6 bxa6 37.Bxa6 g5 38.b5 g4 39.b6 dxc5+ 40.Kxc5 gxf3 41.d6+ Kd7 42.Bb5+ Ke6 43.Bc4+ Ke5 44.b7 Rf8 45.d7 f2 46.Kc6 Kd4 47.Bf1 **1-0**

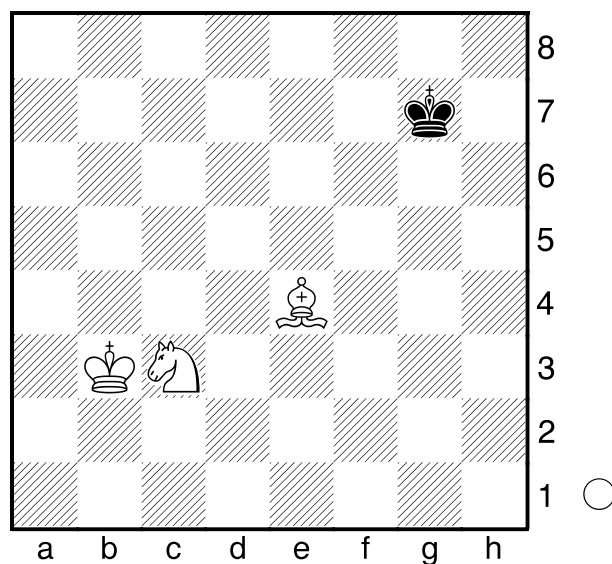
Alexandra Kosteniuk **C55**

Humpy Koneru **2501**
 World Blitz Women 2023 (16.2) **2554**

GM Kosteniuk shows how it's done. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bc4 Bb4 5.0-0 d6 6.Re1 0-0 7.Nd5 Bc5 8.c3 Nxd5 9.exd5 Ne7 10.d4 exd4 11.Nxd4 Nf5 12.Nf3 h6 13.Re4 a5 14.Qe2 Bd7 15.Bd3 Qf6 16.Bd2 Rae8 17.Re1 Rxe4 18.Qxe4 g6 19.Qf4 g5 20.Qg4 Bc8 21.Qe4 Bd7 22.g4 Re8 23.Qxe8+ Bxe8 24.Rxe8+ Kg7 25.Bxf5 c6 26.dxc6 bxc6 27.Be3 Bxe3 28.Rxe3 c5 29.Kg2 d5 30.Re5 Qd6 31.Re3 a4 32.Rd3 Qc6 33.h3 Qb5 34.Rd2 Qb7 35.a3 Kf6 36.Bb1 Qc6 37.Ba2 c4 38.Bb1 Qb7 39.Bf5 Kg7 40.Nd4 Qb6

41.Re2 Qb7 42.Bb1 Qb8 43.Nf5+ Kf6
 44.Nxh6 Qf4 45.Nf5 Qc1 46.Bc2 Qxb2
 47.Ne3 Qxa3 48.Nxd5+ Kg7 49.Re5 f6
 50.Re7+ Kf8 51.Ra7 Qc5 52.Ra8+ Kf7
 53.Be4 a3 54.Ne3 Ke7 55.Nf5+ Kd7
 56.Nd4 Ke7 57.Ra6 Kf7 58.Ra4 Ke7
 59.Ra8 Kf7 60.Bf3 Ke7 61.Nc2 Qb5
 62.Rxa3 Qb2 63.Ra7+ Kd8 64.Nd4
 Qxc3 65.Nc6+ Ke8 66.Re7+ Kf8
 67.Rc7 Qd3 68.Nb4 Qd4 69.Nd5 Ke8
 70.Ne3 c3 71.Rc8+ Kd7 72.Ra8 Qd2
 73.Ra7+ Kd8 74.Ra8+ Kd7 75.Be4
 Qd4 76.Bf5+ Kc7 77.Rc8+ Kb7 78.Rc4
 Qe5 79.Kf3 Kb6 80.Ke2 Kb5 81.Kd3
 Qh2 82.Rxc3 Qxf2 83.Nc2 Qf1+
 84.Kd2 Qf2+ 85.Kc1 Qf1+ 86.Kb2 Qf2
 87.Bd3+ Kb6 88.Be4 Kb5 89.Kb3 Kb6
 90.Na3 Qd4 91.Bc2 Qd5+ 92.Kb2 Qd4
 93.Nb1 Qe5 94.Bf5 Qe2+ 95.Kb3
 Qb5+ 96.Ka2 Qd5+ 97.Kb2 Qg2+
 98.Ka3 Qd5 99.Rc2 Qa5+ 100.Kb2
 Qb4+ 101.Ka1 Qd4+ 102.Ka2 Qd5+
 103.Kb2 Qb5+ 104.Ka2 Qd5+ 105.Ka3
 Qa5+ 106.Kb2 Qb4+ 107.Kc1 Qe1+
 108.Kb2 Qb4+ 109.Ka2 Qa4+ 110.Na3
 Qd4 111.Kb3 Qd5+ 112.Rc4 Qd1+
 113.Kb2 Qd2+ 114.Bc2 Qg2 115.Rc3
 Qf2 116.Kb3 Qd4 117.Nc4+ Kb7
 118.Ne3 Qb6+ 119.Ka2 Qa5+ 120.Kb2
 Qe5 121.Nc4 Qd4 122.Na5+ Kb6
 123.Nb3 Qe5 124.Nd2 Kb5 125.Kb3
 Qe6+ 126.Nc4 Ka6 127.Bd3 Kb7
 128.Kb4 Qe7+ 129.Kb3 Qe6 130.Kb2
 Qe1 131.Nd6+ Kb6 132.Ne4 Qg1
 133.Kb3 Qh1 134.Nxf6 Qxh3
 135.Nd7+ Ka7 136.Ne5 Qh2 137.Nc6+
 Kb6 138.Nb4 Qg2 139.Bf5 Qf2
 140.Rc6+ Kb7 141.Rc3 Kb6 142.Nd5+
 Kb7 143.Be4 Kb8 144.Nb4 Qf7+
 145.Rc4 Qe6 146.Bd5 Qe3+ 147.Rc3
 Qb6 148.Kc4 Qc7+ 149.Kb3 Qb6
 150.Kc4 Qf2 151.Kb5 Qe2+ 152.Rc4
 Qe8+ 153.Bc6 Qe5+ 154.Rc5 Qb2
 155.Bd5 Qe2+ 156.Bc4 Qb2 157.Rf5
 Kc7 158.Rxg5 Kd6 159.Rd5+ Ke7
 160.g5 Kf8 161.Kc5 Kg7 162.Nc6

Qf2+ 163.Nd4 Qf8+ 164.Kb5 Qb8+
 165.Ka4 Qa7+ 166.Kb4 Qe7+ 167.Rc5
 Qe1+ 168.Kb5 Qe8+ 169.Nc6 Qe3
 170.Rd5 Kg6 171.Nd4 Qe8+ 172.Kc5
 Qe7+ 173.Kb5 Qb7+ 174.Ka4 Qa7+
 175.Kb4 Qb7+ 176.Nb5 Qe7+ 177.Ka5
 Qe1+ 178.Kb6 Qe3+ 179.Kc6 Qe8+
 180.Kc5 Qe3+ 181.Kb4 Qe7+ 182.Ka4
 Qe4 183.Kb3 Qb1+ 184.Kc3 Qa1+
 185.Kb4 Qe1+ 186.Nc3 Qe7+ 187.Kb3
 Qb7+ 188.Rb5 Qf3 189.Bd5 Qe3
 190.Be4+ Kg7 191.Rb7+ Kf8 192.g6
 Qd4 193.g7+ Qxg7 194.Rxg7 Kxg7

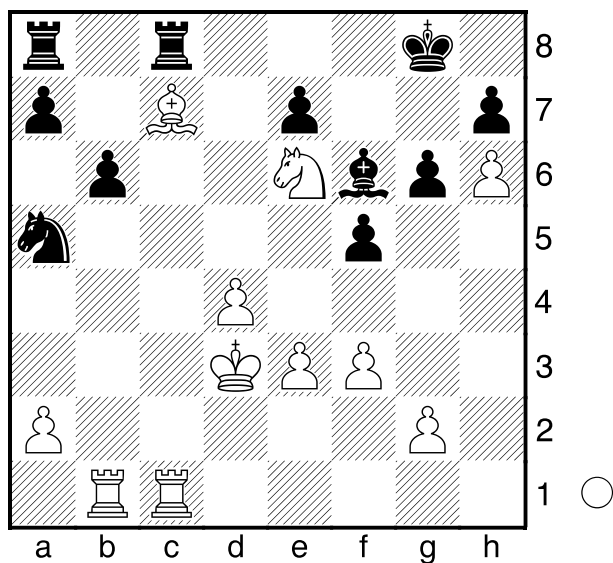


195.Kc4 Kf6 196.Kd4 Kg5 197.Ke5
 Kg4 198.Ne2 Kg5 199.Bf3 Kg6
 200.Nf4+ Kg7 201.Bd5 Kh6 202.Kf6
 Kh7 203.Ng6 Kh6 204.Bg8 Kh5
 205.Ne5 Kh6 206.Ng4+ Kh5 207.Kf5
 Kh4 208.Kf4 Kh5 209.Bf7+ Kh4
 210.Be8 Kh3 211.Ne3 Kh4 212.Ng2+
 Kh3 213.Kf3 Kh2 214.Bd7 Kg1
 215.Kg3 Kf1 216.Bb5+ Kg1 217.Nf4
 Kh1 218.Ba6 Kg1 219.Nh3+
1-0

Gunina, Valentina **D80**
2348

Muzychuk, Anna **2447**
 FIDE Women's World Blitz Championship (17.1)

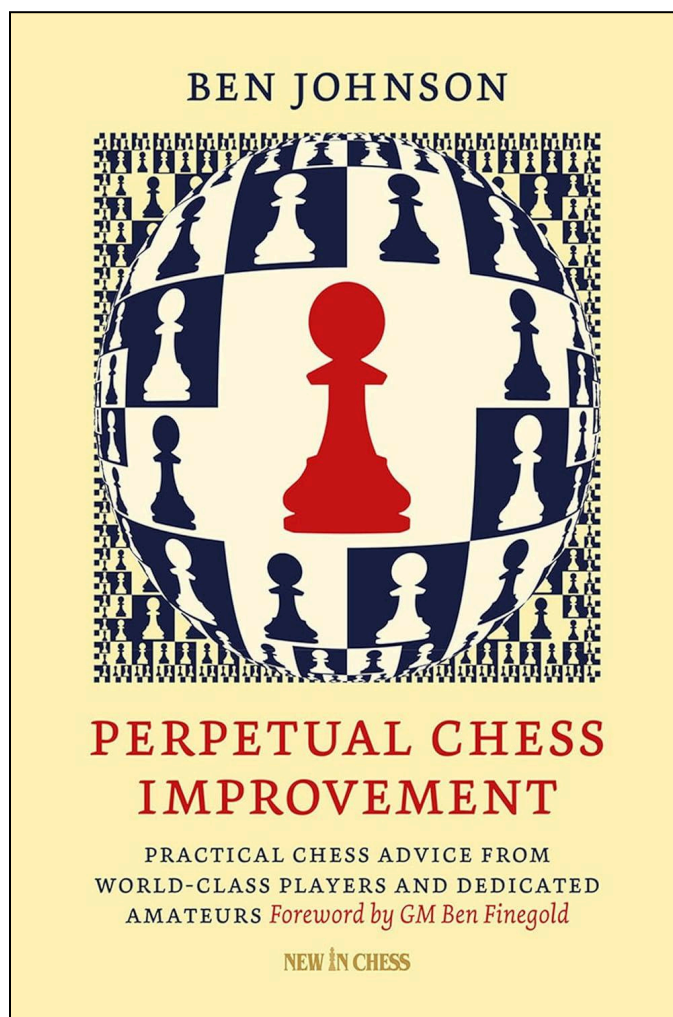
Black gets squeezed to death. 1.d4 Nf6
 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bg5
 Ne4 6.Bf4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 c5 8.e3 Qa5
 9.Qd2 cxd4 10.cxd4 Qxd2+ 11.Kxd2
 dxc4 12.Bxc4 0-0 13.h4 Nc6 14.h5
 Na5 15.Bd3 Be6 16.h6 Bf6 17.Ng5
 Bc4 18.Ne4 Bh8 19.Bc7 Bxd3
 20.Kxd3 Nc6 21.Rab1 f5 22.Nc5 b6
 23.Ne6 Rfc8 24.Rhc1 Na5 25.f3 Bf6



26.g4! Kf7 27.d5 fxg4 28.fxg4 g5
 29.e4 Kg6 30.e5 Bh8 31.Rc2 Re8
 32.Rf1 Rac8 33.Rf5 Bf6 34.exf6 exf6
 35.Rcf2
1-0

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The How to Study Chess on Your Workbook Volume 2 by Davorin Kuljasevic 198 pages \$24.95

Tens of thousands of books have been written about chess and among these titles are a number which will teach you how to play better in the opening, middlegame, and ending. What are rarer, much rarer, are books that aim to teach you how to study chess.

The birth of this genre dates back to Alexander Kotov's *How to Think Like a Grandmaster* which appeared in English in the early 1970s. Kotov's book was well received and since then many others covering similar subject material have appeared including *Chess Training for Budding Champions* by Jesper Hall, *Pump Up Your Rating* by Axel Smith, *Applying Logic in Chess* by Erik Kislik, *How to Study Chess on Your Own* by Davorin Kuljasevic and *Chess Improvement* by Barry Hymer and Peter Wells.

The three books being reviewed here all belong to this category. One, *Improve Your Chess Now* by the Norwegian-American Grandmaster Jonathan Tisdall, was first published to widespread acclaim by Cadogan (Everyman) in 1997. This edition is essentially the same book but has a new preface by the

author. It also features a more generous layout plus the games are numbered and the index is more complete.

Despite having been written over a quarter of a century ago *Improve Your Chess Now* does not feel dated. Many of the topics Tisdall discusses such as pattern recognition and the art of playing bad positions are front and center today in any discussion of how to improve.

Tisdall's critical examination of Kotov's tree of analysis back in 1997 moved the discussion forward on how to improve one's analytical proficiency. His suggestion to incorporate a daily regimen of blindfold games to develop one's vision is still a good one as is his idea to play through and memorize short games in one's mind.

Improve Your Chess Now was written at a time when chess engines and the Internet played a much smaller role than they do now. These are now critically important, albeit more for professional players than those in his target audience of players rated roughly 1600-2200. Where Tisdall's book could have benefited from some updating is in the suggested reading list.

Club players looking for sensible and realistic advice on how to improve, who do not already have a copy of this book, will find *Improve Your Chess Now* most helpful.

Many in the chess community will be familiar with New Jersey master Ben Johnson's Perpetual Chess Podcast which he launched in 2016. During the past seven years Johnson has interviewed hundreds of chess players from top Grandmasters to amateurs. Pretty much everything chess-related has been discussed on the Perpetual Chess Podcast, but if one had to pinpoint the most popular topic it would likely be how can amateurs with busy schedules improve.

This topic is front and center in Johnson's *Perpetual Chess Improvement* which covers pretty much everything under the sun. The table of contents makes clear just how extensive the coverage is:

Part I: The four pillars of chess improvement

Chapter 1 Tournament games and their substitutes

Chapter 2 Game analysis

Chapter 3 Calculation and pattern recognition

Chapter 4 Coaches, chess friends and mentors

Part II: Other aspects of chess you may want to work on

Chapter 5 Do amateurs overemphasize opening study?

Chapter 6 Must you know endgames?

Chapter 7 Mimicking the masters

Chapter 8 Board visualization and blindfold chess

Chapter 9 How to approach speed chess

Chapter 10 Tactics redux

Part III: Working on your game away from the board

Chapter 11 Status and titles

Chapter 12 Chess checklists

Chapter 13 Habits and identity

Chapter 14 Plateaus

Chapter 15 Deliberate practice and chess study

Chapter 16 Over-the-board tournament routines

Chapter 17 Playing against children

Chapter 18 Rest, fitness and mindfulness

Part IV: Tools of improvement

Chapter 19 Chess books

Chapter 20 How to use the chess sites

Chapter 21 ChessBase and Lichess studies

Chapter 22 Extracting lessons from Stockfish and Leela

Chapter 23 Optimizing Chessable

Chapter 24 Chess YouTube

Part V: Final thoughts on incorporating chess study into your life

Chapter 25 Quantity vs quality

Chapter 26 Parting advice and reminders

Chapter 27 Games

Perpetual Chess Improvement doesn't just offer a wealth of information, it is also a fun read. Players of all levels will find something of interest here.

The How to Study Chess on Your Workbook Volume 2 by Davorin Kuljasevic, differs from the other two books reviewed in that it is aimed at a very specific audience (FIDE 1500-1800) and is much more structured.

This follow-up volume to a previous workbook aimed at those rated 1800-2100 covers different parts of the game with well-explained examples and lots of exercises. Club players will benefit in particular from Kuljasevic's chapter entitled Visualization Bootcamp. An experienced teacher, he understands just how difficult it can be for club level players to visualize a few moves ahead.

This is Kuljasevic's fourth book and his fourth winner.

January Chess Social

We had an amazing Chess Social on Friday, January 5, with more than 40 people showing up to enjoy snacks and beverages. Afterwards, folks moved on to the Meeting Room to watch *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, the first offering in Mechanics' Institutes month-long Chess in the Movies series hosted by [CinemaLit](#).



CinemaLit host **Matthew Kennedy** with Mechanics' Institute Chess Coach **Zorba Hughes**, a big fan of movies featuring chess. Zorba co-hosted Friday's CinemaLit offering, *Searching for Bobby Fischer*,

Winter Chess Camps

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Club held our annual Winter Camps and they were a huge success! Over the holidays we had 35 campers join us to play chess, solve puzzles, and make new friends. Our promising scholastic campers had a lot of fun playing the royal game, although it's up for debate whether they prefer bughouse to regular old chess.

Additionally, all of the parents who responded to our camp survey gave us a unanimous whopping 5 star rating and we're proud of the great feedback we've been getting. We'll be offering camps in the Spring and all Summer as well, so if you know scholastic players who may be interested please check out our camps in the future!





Richard Hack

Tales from the Chess Cafe

December 18, Paul Whitehead said: "In chess there's always a danger of overthinking things." Elliott Winslow piped in: "Or underthinking." I found an admonitory description online: "Overthinking is when you dwell on or worry about the same thing repeatedly. People who overthink can be paralyzed by their worries and may struggle to make decisions or take action. Overthinking can be caused by — and contribute to — depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders." All of which could be caused by bad chess habits, too.

Continue to look for wins when you've already found one. "When Sal and I see a winning move, we look for more winning moves. Like the shortest win; or to have a backup plan. When you have a good position, you try to find the quickest way to win. And when you have a bad position, you just keep trying to survive and make the game last longer."

Paul called it "a classic book," Sal "an incredible book": *The Art of the Middlegame*, by Paul Keres and Alexander Kotov, with an introduction and short first chapter by Harry Golombek. It was first published in Sweden in 1961, in English by Dover in 1964 and by others later. It has been winning friends for a long time. A good part of its value and appeal comes from its attention to the defense of difficult or lost positions (a 45-page chapter by Keres); other readers mention Chapter 4 by Kotov ("Various Pawn Positions in the Centre") or the 5th and last chapter, "The Art of Analysis," a deep dive by Keres into half a dozen endgame positions that were adjourned in top-level games back when unfinished games required players to work overnight or even for a few days until the adjournment session. The book is only 238 pages long, but there's a lot in it.

It won't hurt to list again some of the other books we've praised on Monday afternoons: *The Life and Games of Mikhail Tal*; Boris Gelfand, *Positional Decision Making in Chess* and *Dynamic Decision Making in Chess*, as well as his other recent books; Chess Informant's *Anthology of Chess Combinations*; *Grandmaster of Chess: The Complete Games of Paul Keres* (3 vols.); and *My Best Games* by Anatoly Karpov, among many others.

We heard about an 8-year-old girl in a blitz tournament with a performance rating of 2300, WCM Bodhana Sivanandan, the first U.K. citizen to win a youth title in 25 years (a café regular in the know said they're not as strong as they were in the late '70s to late '80s). Somebody out there predicted she would someday be the strongest player in the world. On October 25, Tarjei J. Svensen of Sweden wrote at Chess.com: "It's a stunning performance by the talented youngster, who now has the triple crown in the Girls Under 8 category. Earlier in June, in Batumi, Georgia, she also secured two world championship titles in rapid and blitz, a repeat of the two titles she won in 2022. To add to her incredible list of accomplishments, the eight-year-old has won every single one of the 32 games she's played in the three events." British GM Peter Wells posted on X: "What amazes me is that the areas in

which she most impresses—level-headedness under pressure and endgame technique—are ones you expect to come with age and experience.”

In December we made a quick list of famous tournaments: Hastings 1895, St. Petersburg 1914, New York 1924, Moscow 1925 (see the movie *Chess Fever*), and Zurich 1953. One café member on January 8 asked if there might be a 2024 N.Y. tournament as a kind of centennial commemoration, but apparently there are no such plans yet.

Paul on not staying in your lane: “There’s a lot to learn from people way below you because they present a different set of problems.”

Life can be edgy in various ways, and there is always edginess within a game between two battlers. It’s something you have to control as you try to read the board properly; make good, timely moves; and manage the time on your clock on Tuesday night as it ticks down from two hours to zero (though on Saturday afternoon the time control is usually G/30 or G/40). Knowing there’s a thin line between winning and losing can produce a lot of fear and delight. The tension on the board can obviously affect your emotions quite a bit. As I work to control that, I try to remember the principles I know about how to move and how not to move, when to maintain and build the tension in a chess position, and when to release it. When to complicate and when to liquidate. I thought of it in connection with the tension and flexibility of the abdominal curve in the lower spine. Sit up straight, but stay relaxed, too. There are four natural curves in the spine, from neck to tail.

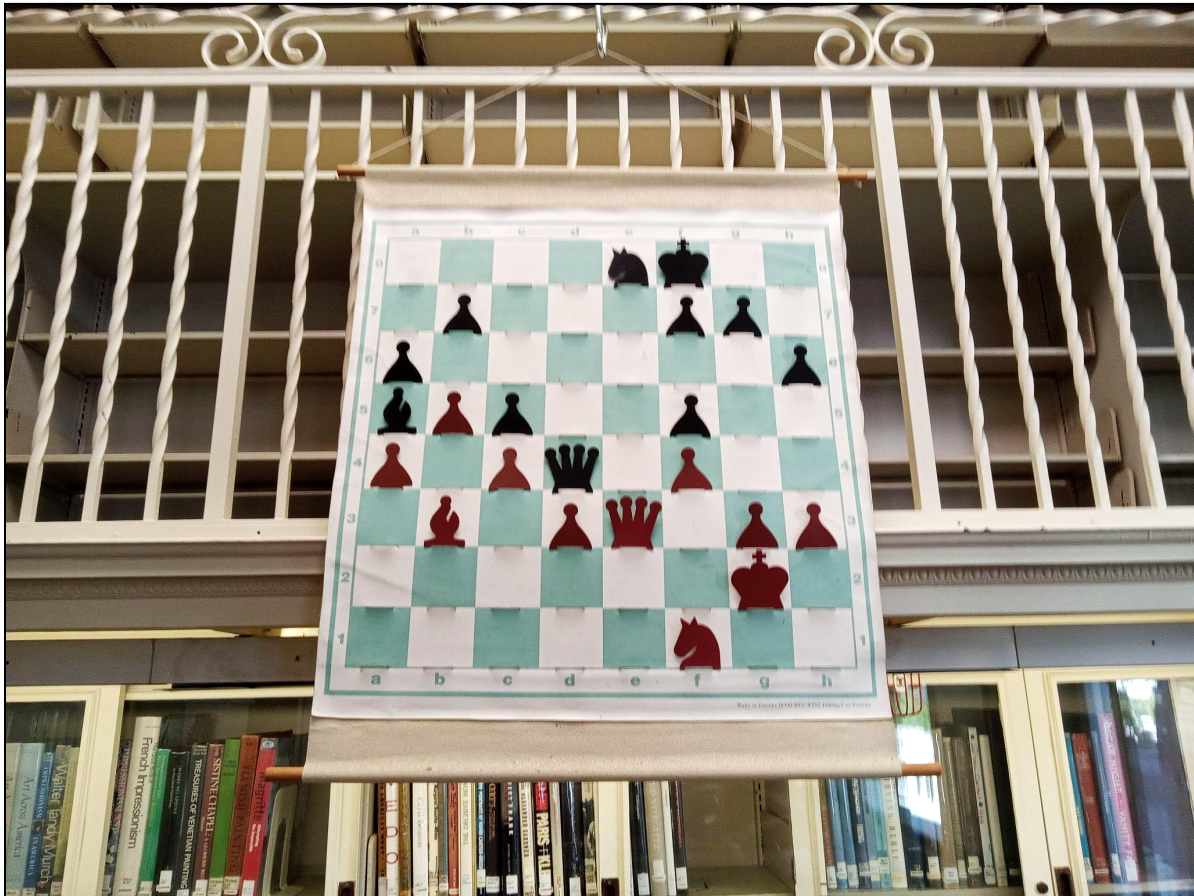
GM Simon Williams wrote about sealing the win of a key game against Boris Gelfand in the 2012 European Club Championships. Gelfand played in the Candidates Tournament six times; he won it in 2011 and played a match with Anand the following year. Williams gives the 43-move game four and a half pages with eight diagrams. Here’s how he defined the moment after Gelfand resigned: “At this point I turned into a shaking mess, as all the adrenaline started to flow out of my body, but I have to admit it was one of the best feelings that I have ever had playing chess. That is why we all love the game so much. Gelfand was a perfect gentleman and congratulated me on my victory, which is something that you do not see every day.” (*The Killer Dutch*, Everyman Chess: 2015, p. 20.)

We distinguish pieces from pawns, but at other times the pawns are included in the definition of pieces. “Chess” in the Merriam-Webster 9th New Collegiate Dictionary is defined as “a game for 2 players, each of whom moves [their] 16 pieces according to fixed rules across a checkerboard and tries to checkmate [their] opponent’s king.” How would you define it, if that were your job?

The Chess Cafe is a meeting place to talk about chess, life, and everything in between. [Join](#) FIDE Master and Chess Room Coordinator Paul Whitehead and a revolving cast of folks from around the country in a fun and casual atmosphere to discuss the latest chess developments and for the pure love of the game. The Chess Cafe is suitable for all levels of players and free for everyone.

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.



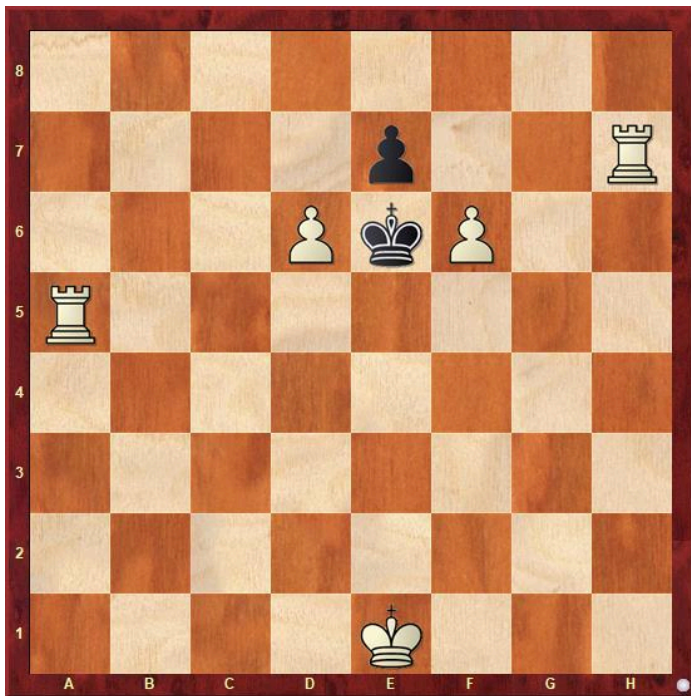
“Tunnel-Vision” is the theme this week.

Black to move and win. Taken from the game Anderson vs Eastham, Mechanics' Institute Tuesday Night Marathon, 2017. Focused on the right side of the board, black missed the opportunity to snag the bishop on b3 with **1...Qb2+**! The game ended in a draw instead when black traded queens with **1...Qxe3+**.

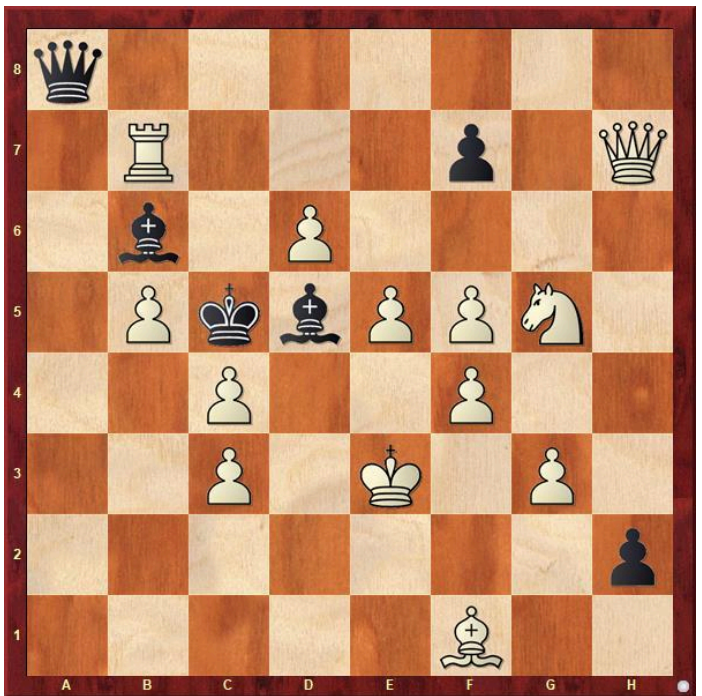
Seeking Scholastic Chess Coaches

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 \(milibrary.org\)](https://milibrary.org/employment-opportunities)

Tony's Teasers



1. **W.A. Shinkman** 1872
White to play and mate in 3.



2. **T. Lama** 2023
White to play and mate in 5.

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](#).



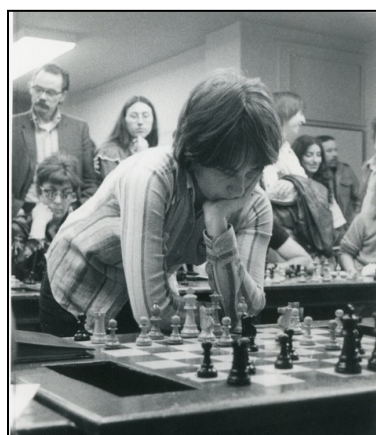
Information about scholastic events, camps, and programming can be found [here](#).



Play chess in the oldest club in the United States!

January & February Tournaments

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess



23rd Burger Memorial Saturday, January 6 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/40;d5	Members \$40 Non-Members \$50
New Year Tuesday Night Marathon Tuesdays, January 9 - February 20 6:30 pm 7 Rounds G/120;d5	Members \$70 Non-Members \$100
Monthly Scholastic Swiss Saturday, January 20 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$35
Monthly Quads Saturday, January 20 3:00 pm 3 Rounds G30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$35
At Least Twenty-One Tournament Saturday, January 27 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/60;d5	Members \$40 Non-Members \$50
1st Alla Kushnir Memorial Saturday, February 3 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/40;d5	Members \$40 Non-Members \$50
Monthly Scholastic Swiss Saturday, February 10 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$35
Monthly Quads Saturday, February 10 3:00 pm 3 Rounds G30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$40
2nd Falconer Memorial (FIDE-Rated) Saturday & Sunday, February 24 - 25 10:00 am 4 rounds G/90+30	Members \$70 Non-Members \$100
February FIDE Blitz Tuesday, February 27 7:00 pm 5 round double Swiss G/3+2	Members \$20 Non-Members \$30



Tournaments in March

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

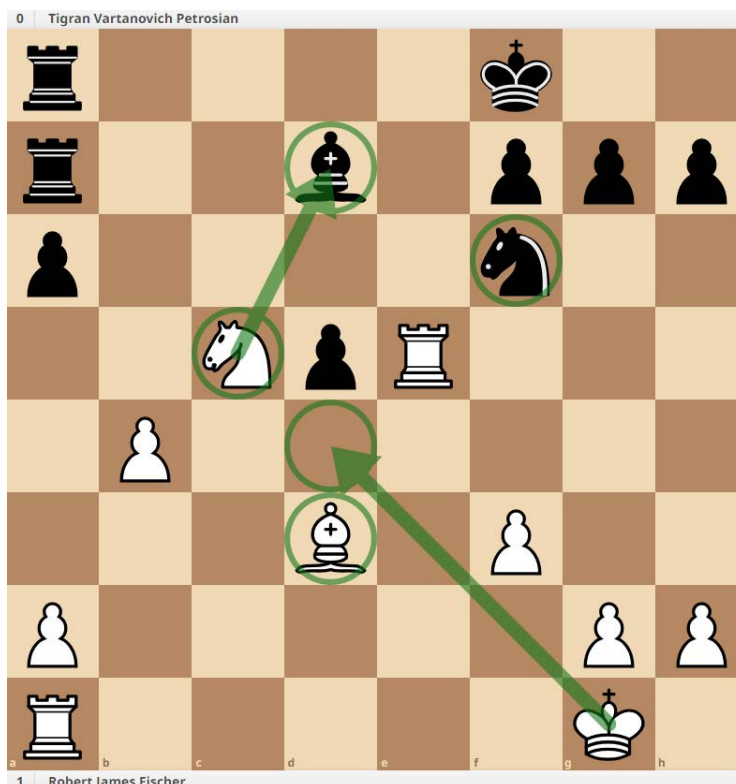


1st Bobby Fischer Memorial Saturday, March 2 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/40;d5	Members \$40 Non-Members \$50
Spring Tuesday Night Marathon Tuesdays, March 5 - April 16 6:30 pm 7 Rounds G/120;d5	Members \$70 Non-Members \$100
Monthly Scholastic Swiss Saturday, March 16 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$35
Monthly Quads Saturday, March 16 3:00 pm 3 Rounds G30;d5	Members \$30 Non-Members \$40
At Least Twenty-One Tournament Saturday, March 23 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/60;d5	Members \$40 Non-Members \$50
Scholastic Chess Championship Saturday, March 30 10:00 am 4 Rounds G/30;d5	Free!



Game Analysis Series

with FM Paul Whitehead



**Thursdays
February 1 -
March 7**

5:30 - 6:30 pm

6 Classes

**Chess Room
Annex 4th Floor**

**Registration:
milibrary.org/chess**

Celebrate your finest victories, and learn from heart-wrenching defeats. The key to success in chess lies in understanding our own games. How do I determine my path forward? Where did I go wrong? Why wasn't that the best move and what could I have done instead?

Ideal for TNM and club players who want to improve their game and perhaps get a few plans in place for their next match. Students will be expected to send .pgns or bring in scoresheets to the class for analysis.

Cost: Members \$175, Non-Members \$200

chessroom@milibrary.org

(415) 393-0110 | 57 Post Street, San Francisco CA 94104

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.

**Every Sunday
on Zoom
from
10 am to 12 pm**

**Register at
milibrary.org/chess**

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

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



MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE

Since 1854

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



Solutions

Tony's Teasers:

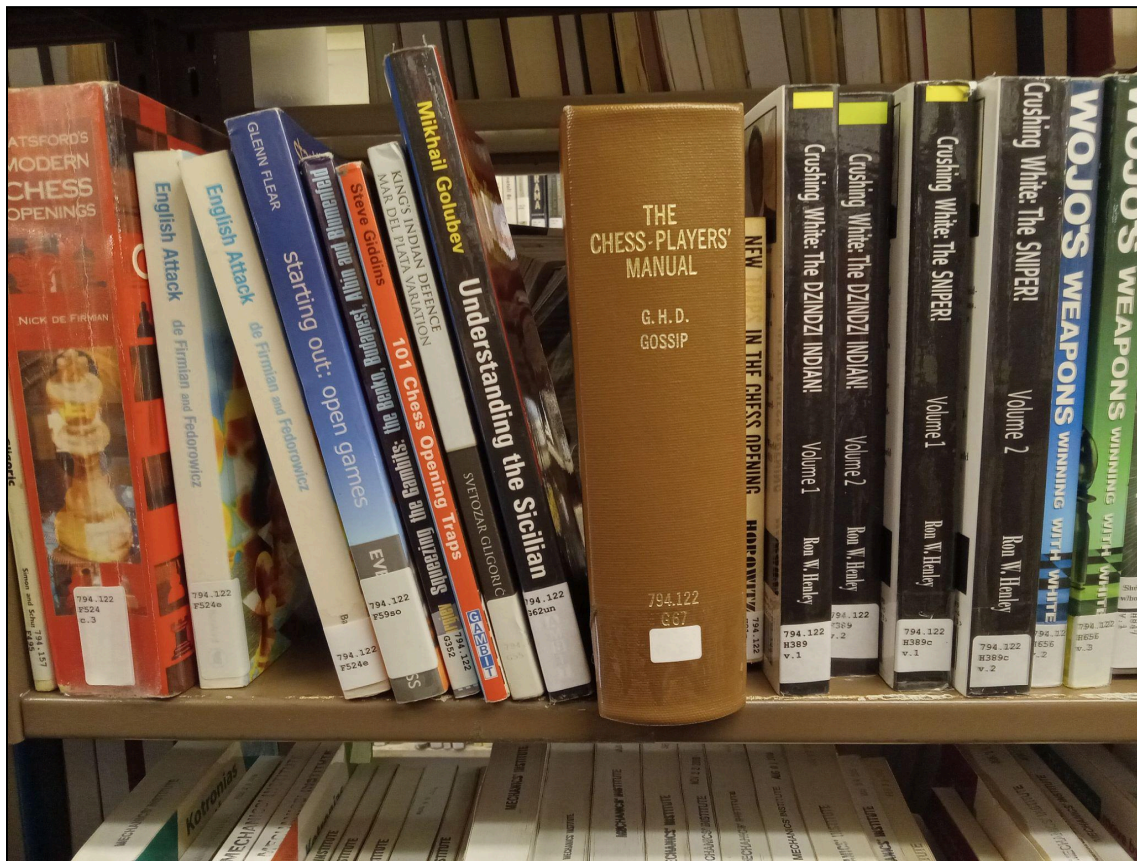
1. **W. A. Shinkman**, 1872. **1.fxe7!** This sets up several mates using under-promotion: **1...Kd7 2.e8(Q)+ Kxe8 3.Ra8#** is fairly straightforward, but both **1...Kf6 2.e8(B)! Ke6 3.Rh6#**, and **1...Kxd6 2.e8(R)! Kc6 3.Re6#**, are quite surprising.
2. **T. Lama**, 2023. **1.Qxf7! h1(Q)**. (1...Qxb7 2.Qxb7 h1(Q) 3.Qc6+! Bxc6 4.Ne6# is one amusing line.) **2.Rc7+! Bxc7** (2...Qc6 3.Rxc6+ Bxc6 4.Ne6#) **3.Qxc7+ Qc6** (3...Bc6 4.Ne6#) **4.Qa7+ Qb6 5.Qa3#!**

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

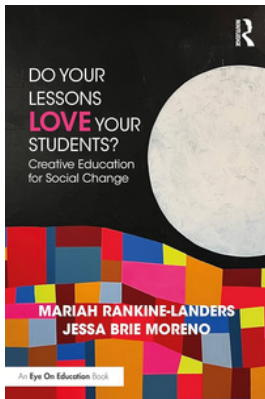
With more than 3,000 books and periodicals, Mechanics' Institute boasts one of the largest chess book collections in the U.S.



You can now access our newsletter directly from the chess home page!
<https://www.milibrary.org/chess>

January Schedule of Events

See our website for a full listing of events



Friday, January 12
6:00 pm

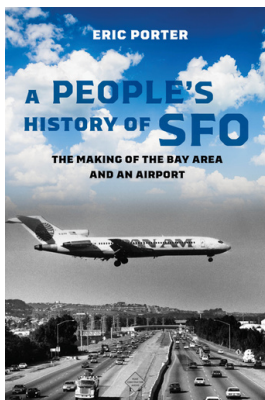
CinemaLit: *Queen of Katwe*

Saturday, January 13
1:00 pm

Teacher Tea: *Do Your Lessons Love Your Students?* with Studio Pathways

Thursday, January 18
6:00 pm

A People's History of SFO with author Eric Porter



Friday, January 19
5:00 pm

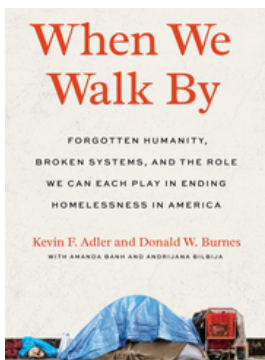
Mechanics' Institute Evening Tour

Friday, January 19
6:00 pm

CinemaLit: *The Thomas Crown Affair*

Thursday, January 25
6:00 pm

When We Walk By with author Kevin Adler and Shireen McSpadden



Friday, January 26
6:00 pm

CinemaLit: *Queen to Play* (on ZOOM)

Wednesday, January 31
6:00 pm

Storytelling Showcase with Corey Rosen

Learn about events and register! [milibrary.org/events](https://www.milibrary.org/events)